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## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 9 May 2007

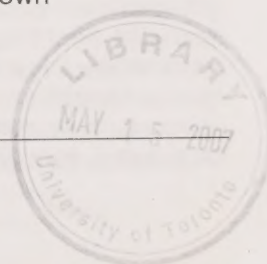
Mercredi 9 mai 2007

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller





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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 9 May 2007

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 9 mai 2007

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### VISITORS

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo–Wellington):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to extend a word of welcome to the visitors who are present in the chamber today to join us for our proceedings this afternoon.

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** I rise today to talk about the ever-increasing stench of Minister Colle's slush fund, because the web of this scandal is growing every day. Minister Colle himself said this in 2004:

"We need a stronger Provincial Auditor who will in essence be a watchdog for the people of Ontario.... It's a wonderful tradition that we have an auditor who ... can report to the people of Ontario...."

"I think that's good for democracy and good for the finances of this province."

But, hang on, there's more. Minister Colle added:

"I think the people of Ontario have a lot of confidence in the Auditor General...."

"The Provincial Auditor will now have the power to go and ensure that we're getting value for money and the taxpayer is getting value for money."

We know that Liberal policy means saying one thing and doing another. But I'm holding him to his word and saying that if Minister Colle really and truly feels so strongly about the role of Auditor General Jim McCarter, let him do his job and get to the bottom of this slush fund scandal—or are your words simply Liberal rhetoric?

It's becoming more and more clear that transparency and accountability is far too much to ask from Dalton McGuinty. Ontario taxpayers aren't fooled, and they have a right to know. The time is long overdue to call in the auditor to investigate this ordeal.

Let me close with another statement made by Mr. Colle while in opposition: "This is the message: Be accountable."

John Tory and the PC caucus couldn't agree more.

### EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I am pleased to speak today to honour the success of the On-Track Pre-Employment program in my riding of Scarborough Southwest. This month marks the third anniversary of the program at the corner of Kennedy Road and Eglinton Avenue in one of Toronto's identified priority neighbourhoods, Kennedy Park.

On-Track's regional director, Marie Heron, founded On-Track in 1999 in another high-needs community, Jane and Finch, to serve single mothers receiving social assistance. It was the first program funded by the government of Canada that was designed to facilitate Ontario Works clients. Next month it is celebrating its 100th client group.

In its first year of operation in Kennedy Park, On-Track saved the city of Toronto more than \$500,000 in social assistance payments by moving women from welfare to sustainable employment. On-Track clients have been successfully hired by large employers such as the Royal Bank, TD Waterhouse, the Toronto Transit Commission, Re/Max and the province of Ontario.

Now part of our government's successful Employment Ontario network, On-Track is working with employers and community partners to expand and strengthen its services to maximize the value of program dollars.

As the local member representing many clients being served in Kennedy Park, I'm extremely proud of the service provided by On-Track, which allows women to achieve their career and life goals. I am equally proud of our government's commitment to providing real solutions for those on social assistance to find meaningful and sustainable employment.

I congratulate Marie Heron of On-Track and wish her well in her worthwhile endeavour.

### MINISTER'S EXPENSES

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** Today's Toronto Sun carried a story briefly outlining Energy Minister Duncan's use of a government plane to fly himself and six others to a conference in Thunder Bay and back to Toronto. A spokesman in the minister's office claimed that the cost was the same as that of the use of a commercial flight. That is blatantly inaccurate, to be polite. Costs of commercial flights are dramatically lower, and use of Air Canada or WestJet would have saved taxpayers thousands of dollars.



Misuse of tax dollars and disingenuous justification for it is becoming a trademark feature of this McGuinty Liberal government. Why would the minister need four staffers to travel with him? Why would he need two police officers? Why was it so necessary for him to get back to Toronto to chair cabinet?

As a former Solicitor General and a former chair of cabinet, I don't believe there are reasonable answers to those questions. I think it's all about this Liberal government's lack of respect for tax dollars, starting at the top, and this minister's grandiose view of himself as someone terribly important and deserving of a large entourage. That's what this boils down to: lack of respect for tax dollars and a minister with an over-inflated ego or a presidential complex.

The people of Ontario are catching on to this Liberal bunch, and their days are numbered.

### HEALTHY SCHOOLS

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron—Bruce):** I rise today to talk about the good work being done through the Healthy Schools recognition program, a joint venture between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health Promotion. The object of the Healthy Schools recognition program is to promote and celebrate healthy behaviours and practices in Ontario's publicly funded schools, the concept being that healthy schools can have a positive impact on student health and learning.

Beginning last summer, all schools were challenged to start developing a healthier learning environment for students. By way of accepting the Healthy Schools challenge, a school declares its commitment to work toward being a healthier school. This program has been incredibly successful. Sixteen schools in the riding of Huron—Bruce have accepted the government's Healthy Schools challenge to do at least one more thing to become healthier.

This past Friday, I was on hand at Holmesville Public School to present the staff and students with a pennant commemorating their dedication and enthusiasm toward taking up this challenge. This program is yet another way in which the McGuinty government is improving the province's education system by making a positive impact on student health and learning for all Ontario students. I can tell you that the enthusiasm at Holmesville Public School was reflected in my other 16 schools. The students are up for the challenge and looking forward to it and will embrace their healthier environment.

### NORTHERN ECONOMY

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** The lifeblood of the north is found in the forestry and mining sectors, and it is a result of the policies of the McGuinty government that is the downfall of those sectors and is adding to the migration out of the north.

Wednesday last, I had the privilege to tour North America's deepest base metal mine in Timmins:

Xstrata's Kidd Creek. Every miner I had the ability to speak with asked me the same question: Why is it that the current Liberal government is chasing away foreign investment by changing the taxation laws for Ontario's first and, as stated by Jim from De Beers, probably only, diamond mine? This was from the miners who extract copper, zinc, silver and platinum—not diamonds. They know that their jobs and economy are heavily dependent on foreign investment.

As stated by Jim Gowans, president and CEO of De Beers Canada, "this government has now sent a signal to the international investment community that Ontario is not a stable place to invest." This government is telling the proud citizens of northern Ontario that investments by private industry in their communities, companies that will assist with education and training, keeping youth in the north—that Dalton McGuinty will punish those willing to step up and support Ontario's north.

De Beers has invested over \$640 million, with more to come—well, maybe. This investment represents over 1,000 northern jobs, with hundreds going to the First Nations community, and over \$147 million in aboriginal businesses alone, and that's to date. Also, the investment represents \$6.7 billion in GDP for Ontario, with \$4.2 billion for northern Ontario.

When will the McGuinty government stop punishing the north and let the northern lifeblood of the mines and forests flourish again?

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

1340

### EDUCATION FOR THE DEAF

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York):** Today I am pleased to rise as critic for disabilities to discuss issues surrounding education for the deaf in Ontario.

Recently, the Coalition of Concerned Parents and members of the community held a demonstration at the Minister of Education's office to bring attention to the plight of deaf students. They will have another rally here in front of the Legislature on Friday, May 11, at 10 a.m. to support deaf children's right to sign-language education. I encourage my colleagues on all sides of the House to join that demonstration.

This coalition has some serious concerns about education for the deaf that are being ignored by this government. Most problematic is that deaf children are being denied access to sign-language education in Ontario schools. No policy has been set for students who are not succeeding in spoken-language programs. It is true that some children do succeed in spoken-language education; however, what happens to the children who do not have access to sign-language education? What happens is that it is really problematic in that, the coalition has found, there are more and more deaf children turning to the Ontario disability support program and Ontario Works.

People with disabilities face many obstacles. The deaf should have the right to learn American Sign Language if that is the education that works best for them. The On-



tario government must ensure that all people, regardless of their various abilities, are not prevented from achieving their potential.

Again, I encourage my colleagues to come out here on Friday and support these parents in support of their own children, who require American Sign Language to be taught.

### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** In my riding we celebrate business excellence, and so does the McGuinty government. Since its humble beginning 11 years ago, over 53 businesses have been honoured by their peers and the community through the Stratford and District Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards.

The awards recognize outstanding entrepreneurs, businesses, organizations and individuals who demonstrate a dedication to their product or service and an ongoing commitment to their employees and the community.

The 11th annual business excellence award recipients were announced at a gala banquet on Friday, May 4 at the Arden Park Hotel in Stratford. This gala brought together over 300 Stratford and area business leaders and media personalities. I had the privilege of representing the Honourable Harinder Takhar, Ontario's first Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

I would like to congratulate these award winners: Rheo Thompson Candies for retail; Cooper-Standard Automotive for manufacturing; the Festival Inn for tourism/hospitality; Wightman Telecom for service, professional and commercial; Tabatha Morrison of Tabworks Documentation Services for young entrepreneur; the Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Stratford and district for community service; and Elaine Genyn for winning the personal excellence award.

As well, I would like to thank co-chairs Bo Forbes and Shelley Windsor, who were involved in all of the committee work, for pulling off such a successful event.

As a small business person and as a proud member of the chamber, I want all of our members to share with us in the wonderful work that is happening in small business and the fact that we celebrate that.

### ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I rise today to talk about the McGuinty Liberal government's leadership when it comes to our record on energy conservation and renewables.

The McGuinty Liberals are moving forward with our plan to fight climate change and have taken aggressive actions to ensure a sustainable future for Ontario's children. We've just announced the largest solar farm in all of North America: 40 megawatts, one of the biggest in the world. We're also the first jurisdiction in North America to phase out inefficient light bulbs. In terms of wind power, we are a national leader, with 415 mega-

watts, and by the end of 2008 there will be 1,300 megawatts of wind power in Ontario, an 80-fold increase.

I should remind the members opposite about the years under the two previous governments. Under the Tories, there was no new generation, and there was also a 127% increase in coal use. The NDP cancelled all conservation programs and also cancelled renewable projects, including the Conawapa project, a hydro power lifeline with Manitoba, which would have given us access to 1,250 megawatts of new generation.

The McGuinty Liberals have invested \$2 billion in conservation and we've brought on 3,000 megawatts of clean energy since 2003. We've also introduced the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act, the first of its kind in Canada.

While we know there's always more to do in the fight against climate change, the McGuinty Liberals are taking action now for future generations.

### WATER QUALITY

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex):** I rise in the House today to speak about Ontario's most valuable resource—our water. The McGuinty Liberals have been leading the way on this and are committed to having the most comprehensive water protection program in North America. And we're taking the time to do it right. We have learned from the mistakes of the previous government and have put in place legislation to ensure that Ontario's drinking water is safe, clean and abundant for generations to come.

Our official opposition voted against the Clean Water Act, which implemented recommendations from the inquiry that their government caused. They also nominated a candidate this past weekend who is opposed to the government's clean water regulations. When you have a record of closing water-testing labs and slashing the Ministry of the Environment's budget, you would think that you would at least be in support of source water protection for all Ontarians. Apparently not.

We have implemented 12 of Justice O'Connor's recommendations and helped to implement an additional 22 of the recommendations, we have implemented the toughest training and certification rules in North America for operators of drinking water systems, we have hired 25% more water inspection staff and we are providing funding for source water protection to our communities.

All of us know that we have to keep looking ahead to ensure Ontario's water is safe.

### VISITORS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to introduce my mother, Sally Tabuns, and three friends of hers, Shirley Davis, Betty Tarka and Meta Rea from the Lime Ridge Mall coffee club.



## MOTIONS

## COMMITTEE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I think we have unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding committee meeting times.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has asked for unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding committee meeting times. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I move that in addition to its regularly scheduled meetings, the standing committee on social policy be authorized to meet Monday, May 14, 2007, between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 171, An Act to improve health systems by amending or repealing various enactments and enacting certain Acts.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

## HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** In the spirit of co-operation, I know this one will have as much approval with the House.

I move that notwithstanding any other order of the House, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 9, 2007, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number 346. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1349 to 1354.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

## Ayes

Balkissoon, Bas  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Bentley, Christopher  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Brotten, Laurel C.  
Brownell, Jim  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Caplan, David  
Chan, Michael  
Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic

Di Cocco, Caroline  
Dombrowsky, Leona  
Duguid, Brad  
Duncan, Dwight  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Hoy, Pat  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Marsales, Judy  
Matthews, Deborah  
McMeekin, Ted  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Peters, Steve

Phillips, Gerry  
Pupatello, Sandra  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Ramal, Khalil  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Wilkinson, John  
Wynne, Kathleen O.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

## Nays

Arnott, Ted  
Bisson, Gilles  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Klees, Frank  
Kormos, Peter  
Marchese, Rosario

Martel, Shelley  
Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia  
Murdoch, Bill  
O'Toole, John  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Prue, Michael

Runciman, Robert W.  
Savoline, Joyce  
Scott, Laurie  
Tabuns, Peter  
Witmer, Elizabeth  
Yakubski, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 38; the nays are 20.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES

## NURSES

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** It's my pleasure to rise in my place today to celebrate National Nursing Week. This is an opportunity for all to reflect on and give thanks for the extraordinary contribution nurses make in diverse health care settings across our vast province.

Nurses are the heart and soul of our health care system. They are often the people with whom we have first contact when we have a health problem. Each and every day, nurses make a difference in people's lives, delivering care with skill, compassion, dedication and love.

The McGuinty government recognizes the invaluable contribution of nurses. That's why, since taking office, we have worked alongside our nurses and their leaders, sharing our vision of a health care system that makes Ontario the jurisdiction of choice for our health care workers.

Since coming to office in October 2003, we have invested \$300 million on initiatives to help our nurses flourish, and through major increases in health care spending, we have created 5,453 new nursing positions. In addition, another 1,625 are projected from our 2007-08 financial allocations.

Today I'm extremely proud to confirm that our government is fulfilling our commitment to create 8,000 new nursing positions in Ontario. By adding 1,200 new full-time registered practical nurse positions in the long-term-care sector, we will not only enhance Ontario's nursing force, but we will enhance the quality of care for our long-term-care residents.

Our government is providing annual funding of \$57.7 million to create these positions. There will be at least one of these new RPN positions created in each and every one of Ontario's 628 long-term-care homes.

This initiative will increase the number of direct nursing care hours received by residents. It will increase



the percentage of nurses working full-time in the long-term-care sector.

This is the latest initiative to demonstrate our commitment to strengthening the nursing profession in Ontario.

Today, it's a tremendous privilege for me to be able to introduce to the Ontario Legislature Ontario's new Chief Nursing Officer, Vanessa Burkoski. She's in the east gallery. She's accompanied by Dr. Joshua Tepper, our assistant deputy minister of health human resources, and her husband. Welcome, Vanessa.

Vanessa is a health care professional hailing from Windsor—

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues):** Hear, hear.

1400

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** —that's not in my notes; I apologize—who brings a wealth of professional experience and excellence to this position. Ms. Burkoski has worked in Ontario's health care system for more than two decades, in nursing leadership roles that have utilized not only her theoretical and clinical background but also her skills and expertise as a collaborator and negotiator working with stakeholders to achieve positive patient outcomes.

Our government has achieved much in the last few years to support our nurses. Let me quote Linda Haslam-Stroud, president of the Ontario Nurses' Association. Earlier this week, in the *Toronto Star*, she said:

"We have been working with the ... government" and "employers ... to bring nursing back up to the great profession it was before morale plummeted...."

"Solving everything in the complex health care system can't be done with the stroke of a pen and not done overnight."

Our government is on the right track to make Ontario the jurisdiction of choice for health care workers. In February, we announced our nursing graduate guarantee, promising that every nursing graduate in this province would be offered full-time employment in a hospital or long-term-care home, a mental health service provider and elsewhere in the community. We are one of only a couple of jurisdictions in the whole world to ever make such a promise to young nurses.

The initiative I am announcing today builds on the nursing graduate guarantee, and we anticipate that many of the new RPNs hired in long-term-care homes will be new nursing graduates taking advantage of our guarantee.

Our government is also supporting nurses by strengthening Ontario's health care system. That includes enhancing work environments for nurses and ensuring more educational and professional career opportunities, as well as purchasing modern hospital equipment such as patient lifts, electronic beds and safety alarms that not only improve working conditions for nurses but also improve patient safety.

We are also keeping late-career nurses in the profession so their skills and expertise can be shared with

younger nurses by those who have dedicated themselves to patients, in many cases for decades.

As I said, nurses are essential to building a better health care system. We're building that system, and today's announcement is a big part of that.

Thank you to Ontario's nurses.

## WASTE DIVERSION

### RÉACHEMINEMENT DES DÉCHETS

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I am pleased to have this opportunity to report on the positive steps our government is taking to give Ontarians cleaner, greener, more environmentally friendly options.

As we all know, plastic bags are a fact of modern life. Just about every time we make a purchase, it usually involves carting something home in a plastic bag. In fact, here in Ontario, 80 plastic bags get used every second. That's close to seven million plastic bags every day. I continually hear stories from Ontarians about plastic bags littering the sides of our roadways, polluting our water, blocking our drain pipes. I hear from people who have cupboards overflowing with these bags, and they feel they have no options to deal with them. As a result, many of these plastic bags end up in our landfills. This is not simply acceptable.

Over the past few months, I have been working with progressive companies and associations to resolve this issue. There are a number of great initiatives already occurring, but more needs to be done. Giving consumers choice will make a big difference, and that's why I'm very proud that our government has brokered a voluntary agreement with environmental, retail, grocery and industry organizations that gives Ontarians more options to help them deal with the ubiquitous plastic bag.

Mieux encore, grâce à cette entente, les sacs en plastique seront moins nombreux dans notre quotidien au cours des cinq prochaines années. Je suis très fière de faire partie d'un gouvernement écologiste.

Nous tenons absolument à protéger l'environnement et nous nous employons de bien des façons à bâtir un avenir plus sain et plus respectueux de l'environnement, pour nos enfants et nos petits-enfants.

Even better, it ensures that we will see fewer bags altogether in the next five years. I'm proud to be part of a government that is a green government. We are serious about our stewardship, and we're working in many ways to build a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable future for our children and our children's children.

We know Ontarians care about making their province cleaner and greener. People everywhere, in communities across our province, are recognizing that this is a responsibility we all share. They realize we each need to do more to reduce our environmental footprint. Ontarians want to be part of the solution.

Nous savons que les Ontariens veulent rendre leur province plus propre et plus verte. Aux quatre coins de



l'Ontario, la population est consciente que c'est une obligation que nous devons assumer collectivement. Les Ontariens et Ontariennes savent que nous devons tous individuellement faire plus pour réduire notre empreinte sur l'environnement. Les Ontariens et Ontariennes veulent contribuer à la solution.

Our government is responding by taking action on many different fronts to reduce the amount of packaging going to our landfills. But we can't do it alone. We need to work with Ontario's progressive business leaders on our shared goals of reducing waste and increasing diversion through the three Rs.

Earlier today I was joined by representatives from the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers, the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors, the Retail Council of Canada, the Recycling Council of Ontario, as well as the Canadian plastics industry to announce a new partnership that will help us dramatically scale back the use of plastic bags. This agreement is based on the three Rs hierarchy, with the focus on reduction.

We have set a goal to cut the use of plastic bags by half within five years. The agreement will help—

*Applause.*

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** Thank you. The agreement will help to broaden plastic bag recycling programs across the province and includes consumer education and initiatives to promote reduction, reuse and recycling of bags already in circulation. We need to see demonstrable progress on this issue. That's why the program also includes annual monitoring and public reporting to ensure programs are in place and goals are met.

Many smart business leaders have already stepped up to the plate. They know that being a green company is not only good for our environment; it makes good business sense and reaps huge dividends in promoting a company's image.

I want to acknowledge how important this partnership and its efforts are to our success in reducing waste and building a cleaner, healthier province.

Je désire souligner l'importance que représente ce partenariat pour réussir à produire moins de déchets et à bâtir une province plus verte et plus saine. C'est un grand pas en avant de voir le gouvernement, le secteur de l'alimentation et les groupes de défense de l'environnement coopérer pour atteindre des objectifs communs.

Having government, industry and environmental organizations working co-operatively on shared goals is an important step forward. We believe that it makes sense to work collaboratively, that shared responsibility is the preferred approach to finding solutions. I am confident of success. But this issue is too important. If I am not seeing significant progress on our target of 50% fewer plastic bags, I will deal with this issue through regulation.

The more we practise the three Rs by reducing the number of single-use plastic bags, expanding the use of reusable bags and encouraging consumers to recycle plastic bags, the more we will see real progress and a real reduction in plastic bags going to our landfills. All of these actions will help to reduce the amount of green-

house gases that goes into our atmosphere and contributes to climate change.

We need everyone working together to find effective, creative solutions. We're working together with business and building on our strengths to find effective, made-in-Ontario solutions that work and work well for everyone.

Toutes ces actions vont aider à réduire la quantité des gaz à effet de serre qui sont rejetés dans l'atmosphère et intensifient le changement climatique.

Nous devons tous unir nos efforts pour trouver des solutions ingénieuses et efficaces. Nous collaborons avec les entreprises et misons sur nos forces pour trouver des solutions tout ontariennes qui fonctionnent bien pour tout le monde.

Ontarians are eager and willing to do their part. By taking action, by working in partnership to give people better options and practical solutions, we can build cleaner, greener, more sustainable communities and a brighter and more successful future. That's the kind of future we all want to see.

1410

## CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS CHAMPIONNATS DE CURLING

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I would like to draw to members' attention in the gallery the 2007 world men's curling champions, all from the province of Ontario.

I want to take a moment to commend the efforts of Glenn Howard from Penetanguishene and his rink of third Richard Hart of Pickering, lead Craig Savill of Ottawa, coach Scott Taylor of Barrie, Brent Laing of Huntsville, who was not able to be with us, and Steve Bice of Sarnia, an alternate who also not able to be with us.

Leur impressionnante victoire au Championnat mondial Ford de curling masculin 2007 à Edmonton en avril a permis au Canada de remporter son 30<sup>e</sup> titre mondial en curling masculin.

Their impressive win at the 2007 Ford World Men's Curling Championship in Edmonton in April gave Canada its 30th men's world curling title. The Glenn Howard rink delivered a crushing 8-3 final game win over Team Germany to secure gold and vault Canada into the top position in the world curling championship rankings.

In March, Glenn and his team recorded an impressive win over Newfoundland and Labrador in the final of the 78th Brier in Hamilton, which gave them a spot in the world event.

This was Glenn's first world championship as a skip. He has also figured prominently on two other world championship gold medal-winning teams. In fact, he was a member of the team skipped by his brother Russ Howard that won the 1987 and 1993 world championship titles.

Throughout his career Glenn has proudly represented Ontario and Canada and holds an impressive record of

achievement that today includes the 2007 world men's curling champion, the 2007 Brier champion, the 2006 Brier finalist, 1987 and 1993 world champion, 1987 and 1993 Brier champion, two-time Players' champion, and the four-time McCain/TSN Skins Game champion.

Glenn, Richard, Brent, Craig and Scott have all given Ontarians a great reason to be proud. They have given us more: They are valuable role models for curlers across the province and for all Ontarians, inspiring us to live active, healthy lives.

That's why support for amateur sport will continue to be a priority for the Ontario government. The McGuinty government recognizes the value of amateur sport and does this in a number of ways. In February, I had the real pleasure of announcing an impressive and substantial milestone for Ontario's amateur sport funding. In 2006-07, funding for the Quest for Gold program was close to \$10 million. That meant that more than 950 of Ontario's amateur athletes shared in almost \$7 million in direct financial assistance and \$3 million directed to competition and coaching.

Equally exciting is the fact that the McGuinty government committed another \$10 million to the Quest for Gold program in this year's budget. On hand for Minister Sorbara's budget were two young curlers from Manotick, Neil and Jamie Sinclair. I have no doubt that Neil and Jamie and hundreds of other young curlers across Ontario were watching Glenn's rink at the Brier and the world championships with dreams of future championships. We created the Quest for Gold program to make more of those dreams come true.

The Ontario government also provided close to \$12 million in other funding that touches amateur athletes, with \$7.6 million provided to our 62 provincial sport and multi-sport organizations like the Ontario Curling Association. The program also directly benefits the 2.4 million Ontarians who are members of these organizations, ranging from kids in organized leagues and adults in recreational activities to people at recognized competition levels, as well as our amateur athletes.

We want to build a healthier, stronger Ontario to give all Ontarians a chance to become more active and to achieve excellence, whether it's at the recreational level or in international arenas competitively. We are committed to supporting all of our athletes in their quest for excellence.

I again congratulate Glenn Howard, Richard Hart, Brent Laing, Craig Savill, Scott Taylor and Steve Bice for their hard work and competitive spirit in bringing home the gold. These gentlemen all had an opportunity to meet with their local MPPs, as well as Premier McGuinty. We're very proud of you. Thank you for representing Ontario and Canada so well. We look forward to seeing you in the Olympics in 2010. We know you're going to make it, Glenn. All the best. Way to go.

#### NURSES

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** Let me begin by congratulating Vanessa Burkoski. I'm glad

the government finally has decided to appoint a new provincial Chief Nursing Officer. Our government was very pleased, on the advice of the nurses, to originally create this position at the same time as we created 12,000 additional nursing positions and also created the nursing practitioner position.

However, if I take a look at this announcement—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. I need to be able to hear the member.

**Mrs. Witmer:** As I said, we were very fortunate, working with nurses to create 12,000 positions and also the nurse practitioner position.

If I take a look at the headline here, I think it's a little premature for the government to be celebrating the creation of 8,000 new nursing positions when almost 3,000 of the 8,000 are not yet working, and of that 3,000 who are not working, at least half of them aren't going to be working until 2008. So it's a little premature to be celebrating.

This particular announcement is all about show. There is no detail. There is no plan for implementation. And I will tell you, the sector doesn't know how they can move forward without the detail. It's sadly lacking in any substance whatsoever.

#### WASTE DIVERSION

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** I'm pleased to respond to the Minister of the Environment's statement today. I must say from the outset that we applaud the fantastic work of the Recycling Council of Ontario, as well as the leadership shown by private industry in Ontario, large and small, who are working very hard to do their part to manage our environment.

But once again we see the Liberal environment minister this time—another day, another photo opportunity, another parade to jump in front of, pretending they're taking the lead, and, as if we have not seen enough, yet another last minute, feel-good election stunt with far-off dates and targets that are being kicked out the door before an election.

Let me quote the Toronto Star from today: "Ontario residents and businesses combined recycled only 25% of their trash last year. That's far behind the 2003 Liberal election promise to divert 60% of waste from landfills."

Dalton McGuinty and his team are not practising the three Rs. The only thing they're doing is the three Ds: duck, deflect and deny.

#### CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I consider it an honour today to stand in this House and congratulate Team Glenn Howard on winning the world curling championship. Team Howard curls out of the Coldwater Curling Club, which is in my hometown. It's a town of 1,500 people. It's very seldom that we have a world champion in any particular area.



Not only the province of Ontario and Canadians, but I can't tell you how proud the people in north Simcoe are of this team. There are actually three communities—the town of Midland, the town of Penetanguishene and the village of Coldwater would all like to take credit for the world curling champions. But I can tell you that, leading up to the Ontario title and leading up to the Brier championship, people of all ages and all walks of life in north Simcoe were watching TV very closely and watching the final results.

I thought one of the neatest parts of that world curling championship was when Team Howard played off against Newfoundland for the Canadian title. They interviewed a former world champion, Russ Howard, who is the brother of Glenn, and they said, "Who are you cheering for"—because, if you recall, Russ was actually an Olympic champion. When they said, "Who are you cheering for—Newfoundland or Ontario?", of course he said, "Blood is thicker than Screech." I thought that was the highlight of the event.

I also want to pass on the congratulations I received today to pass on to Team Howard from the Honourable William G. Davis, a former Premier of Ontario. He knows a lot of people up in the Midland area because of his cottage.

Like all Ontarians, all Canadians and people in Simcoe North, we are very, very proud of your accomplishments. Keep up the good work, and we're going to see you winning the world Olympic gold medal in 2010.

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#### WASTE DIVERSION

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** This government made a promise in 2003 to divert 60% of waste from landfill by 2008. That was a promise, a five-year promise, and that was a promise that sank without a trace under the waves. I put in a freedom of information request to find the plan that was to deliver on that promise. Frankly, the researchers, those who are out there beating the bushes, going through the file cabinets, could not find a thing—gone. So today, again, another promise for action five years from now. That's two elections from now—not just this election, but the election in 2012.

Based on the history of broken promises on this file, people should not expect that the shopping bags issue is going to be resolved on the basis of today's statement.

#### CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** On behalf of New Democrats, I want to congratulate the members of the Glenn Howard rink, who are here at Queen's Park today, for your 2007 gold medal win at the Ford World Men's Curling Championship in Edmonton. It was a very impressive showing by a very impressive group, and both Ontario and Canada know that we can expect great things from you in the future. Good luck with everything that will come. We look forward to many more wins, as well, by the four of you.

#### NURSES

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I also, on behalf of New Democrats, want to salute Ontario nurses today and acknowledge the tremendous contribution being made every day by all of them. Whether it's at the bedside in a hospital, providing nursing services in the home, caring for residents in long-term-care homes, working in a health care team, in a family health team or in a community health centre, or delivering health care services through public health units, nurses bring skill, expertise, care and compassion to patients and residents every day, and we are very lucky that they do so.

Now to today's announcement by the Minister of Health. In its desperation to pretend that it has met its election promise on hiring of new nurses, the Minister of Health says the money announced in the budget is going to result in the hiring of new nurses in long-term-care homes. This is completely contrary to comments that were made by Donna Rubin, executive director of the Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors, on budget day. Ms. Rubin said, "While the budget contained \$14 million for the hiring of nurses in long-term care, the reality is that with no money to keep up with inflation, homes will be forced to lay off staff. Homes have been given about 50 cents a day to hire nurses when we needed over \$2 a day just to keep them. We will be laying off three nurses just to hire one." I suspect the residents and families believe Donna Rubin and not the Minister of Health.

It's that same desperation to pretend the government has met its commitment that has the government counting in new graduate internship positions as permanent positions this year. Last year the minister promised, "Every nursing graduate in Ontario will be offered a full-time job somewhere in Ontario." Further, "We are offering this job guarantee to every nursing student." By the time the program got announced, a full-time job guarantee was down to a full-time job opportunity. That doesn't give comfort at all to new graduates because, on the contrary, the government is paying for nursing placements in hospitals for six months. After that, the hospital has to pick up for the next six weeks, and if the graduate is really lucky, the hospital might have the money to actually hire that nurse. But again there's no guarantee that position is going to be full-time, part-time or casual.

That is why Candice Emerson, a fourth-year University of Windsor graduate student in nursing, saw through the government's spin and said, "Why not try to find a new job instead of doing the new-graduate initiative?" That is why Candice is off to work in a Calgary hospital full-time and not in Ontario.

This certainly doesn't meet the minister's big promise to new graduates of a full-time nursing job.

It's also that same desperation that has the government, today in its backgrounder, counting 2,800 future nursing jobs in the overall promise of 8,000, as if they were in place today. They aren't in place today. We don't know when they will be in place. We don't know if they



are ever going to be in place. But the government certainly hasn't met its commitment today.

What do nurses really want? Three things: They want my Bill 30, Safe Needles Save Lives, passed. They want it passed immediately. That's why they were here last week urging the government to get that done. That's why Linda Haslam-Stroud, president of ONA, has said, "We do not need to have this continued injury taking place in the health care workplace when there is an easy answer.... We believe it's really a no-brainer." It is. Pass Bill 30 now.

The nurses want assurance that N95 respirators will be made available to them in every hospital during the next flu pandemic, just as the late Justice Campbell urged this government to do. We don't have that certainty in place yet; we need to.

Finally, we need Bill 45 passed, which was put forward by my colleague Andrea Horwath, to make sexual harassment a part of the Occupational Health and Safety Act in the province of Ontario so that nurses can be assured that they won't be harassed on the job—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

#### HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** On a point of order, Speaker: I want to inform the House that last night 5,764 screaming Sudbury hockey fans cheered as the Sudbury Wolves beat the Plymouth Whalers 5-4 in overtime. The winning goal was scored by homegrown Justin Donati. The next game is tonight, and we hope to go back to Plymouth, Michigan, leading three games to one.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** A point of order on essentially the same subject, Speaker: I thought I should make public that I have today entered into a wager with Governor Eliot Spitzer of New York state regarding the outcome of the upcoming hotly contested hockey series between my beloved Ottawa Senators and the Buffalo Sabres. I should inform the House that I have put on the line a full month's supply of our world-famous Tim Hortons coffee; Governor Spitzer has put up a load of chicken wings from the famous Anchor Bar in Buffalo. We are going to settle this infamous rivalry between the Ottawa Senators and the Buffalo Sabres in six games, and at that time, I beg you to join me as we enjoy some delicious chicken wings.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: There are times when one has to take a stance in opposition to his boss, the Premier of this province. For those of us who have people from our own community of Niagara playing for the Buffalo Sabres, I must say that if the Premier thinks that the Ottawa Senators are going to defeat the Buffalo Sabres, he's dreaming in Technicolor.

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would just like to inform

the House that the heart and soul of the Ottawa Senators, Chris Neil, comes right from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. Is the sportscast finished? It's now time for oral questions.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier, and it concerns the political slush fund operated by his government. For weeks now, we've stood in this House and asked question after question—more than 260 in all, between both of the opposition parties—about this slush fund that the McGuinty government has been running. The answers have been non-existent. The clearest statement we've received from the Premier and his government is that we on this side of the House are somehow racist for asking questions that his own minister acknowledges are legitimate.

Given the number of legitimate questions, acknowledged by the minister, would the Premier not agree that it's time for the Auditor General to be called in by the government, by the minister or by the assembly to get the answers that Ontarians deserve about why millions and millions of their dollars were sent out the door without an application process, without proper oversight, without any kind of a review? Can the Premier give me a single reason why he would not call the Auditor General in to review this now?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** There's no doubt about it that there is a marked difference in terms of the approach that we bring when it comes to dealing with immigration issues. We believe that for too long, our newcomer communities were ignored. We believe they have an absolutely essential contribution to make to the quality of life and the strength of the economy that we enjoy here in Ontario. That's why, for the very first time, with year-end money, we will put in place new capital grants for our partners who are delivering immigration services.

I have said that we can and must do a better job when it comes to developing an application process. We have that process in place now. We look forward to continuing to work with our partners in immigration services to ensure that newly arrived Canadians have access to all the opportunities they need to flourish, to achieve their potential and to contribute to the strength of both this economy and our society.

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**Mr. Tory:** The Premier insists on making this about immigration, when in fact what it is about is accountability. With one or two exceptions, which we will cover today, no one has talked about what these groups do. What we have talked about is how they got the money,



how they knew money was available, what scrutiny was exercised by the government before they got the money and, in some cases, whom did they know in the government when they got the money. These are the kinds of questions. Where the Premier is saying that the ends justify the means, we're saying that we want to take a look at the means and satisfy ourselves that one of our duties here, to safeguard the taxpayers' money, was upheld.

This kind of abuse that the government is engaged in sees money rushed out the door with no accountability, no transparency, no fairness and, in some instances, with the purpose, it appears, of improving the Premier's political fortunes and those of his party.

Having stated that legitimate concern, if the Premier believes that everything has been done right here and it's all about immigration and helping immigrants, why won't you have the auditor come in and confirm that it has all been done right? Why won't you?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I think it would be helpful if we were to take a look at something that was written by way of an editorial in the *Share* newspaper. They bill themselves as Canada's largest ethnic newspaper. I quote from the May 3 edition. It reads:

"We understand the politics at play here. We understand that the Conservatives and the NDP will grasp at opportunity to try and embarrass the governing Liberals, especially with an election a few months away. What we don't find amusing is their using needed assistance to minority communities to further their political ends."

It goes on to say, "This government has worked very hard over the past few years to make a difference in the lives of minorities in this province and has shown real and consistent commitment, not the kind we usually see where politicians only show up a couple of months before an election."

We will continue to work as hard as we can to ensure that every new arrival in our province has every opportunity they need to succeed.

**Mr. Tory:** There is not a member—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** There is not one member on any side in this House who would challenge the duty of the government to do just that. For you to even imply otherwise—as I have said before and I'll say it to your face in here—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** I need to be able to hear the Leader of the Opposition place his question. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade needs to maintain order.

**Mr. Tory:** For you to imply otherwise, that there is any member of this House on any side that doesn't completely uphold and support the need to support these immigrants—as I've have said elsewhere and I'll say it here to your face—is beneath the office that you hold.

What we are talking about here is another of the tests of leadership that one has to pass in this business, and that is the duty that we all have here as members of this

Legislature—one of the most fundamental duties—namely, to safeguard the way in which the taxpayers' money is allocated to anybody at any time for any program.

The Premier said this morning, "I regret that we didn't have that kind of process in place," referring to an application process and so on. You think you can redeem yourself simply by saying that. We're asking simply that the Auditor General, an impartial officer of this Legislature, be asked to look at what happened here and reassure the taxpayers that what you say is true.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the Conservative Party should ask himself why he and his members have voted against virtually every single initiative that we have put in place to better the lives of new Canadians here in the province of Ontario. He might want to ask himself that.

He might want to ask himself why it was that when they were in government they cut adult education programs by 80%. They might want to ask themselves why they not only did not achieve success; they didn't even bother to try to land our very first Canada-Ontario immigration agreement, which ensures for the first time that immigrants arriving in the province of Ontario are entitled to the same financial supports as an immigrant arriving in the province of Quebec. They might want to ask themselves why they never made those efforts while they were in government. And they might, one more time, want to ask themselves why it is that they put immigration in the crime section of their platform. If the leader of the official opposition denounces that, renounces that and is turning his back on that, he should stand up right now and say that.

**The Speaker:** New question?

**Mr. Tory:** The Premier can continue to play these cards if he thinks that's what's suitable, but I think what people are really asking themselves in this instance is not calling into question the commitment or not calling into question the bona fides of members of this Legislature with respect to their support for immigrants, but rather they are calling into question whether or not people are prepared to be accountable for the way in which taxpayers' money is spent by this government, regardless of who it goes to.

These people, the taxpayers we all represent, work hard to earn their money and they expect a minimum standard of accountability from their government, and you, sir, have fallen well short in that regard.

The Premier wants to read editorials. Let me read you an extract from the *Toronto Star* today. They say: "Accountability and transparency should not be treated as an afterthought. McGuinty should bring in the Auditor General without delay."

The Premier admitted this morning that he didn't get this right, nor did his government. For that reason, I would suggest he heed the words of the *Toronto Star* and call in the auditor.

I'm simply asking the Premier this question: Why won't you call in the auditor? What is it you are hiding? What are you afraid of?



**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To highlight the marked difference in terms of the approach that we bring to these issues, the newest nominated Conservative candidate said that funding capital projects for new Canadians is “pandering to ethnic communities.”

I would ask the leader of the official opposition whether he endorses that view, just recently articulated by the newest member of his party.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. It's going to be a long afternoon. The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** Some of these grants—and we'll have a chance to talk about them here in question period—are worse than any suggestion of that kind, because what they are is an absolutely irresponsible allocation of taxpayers' money to any group whatsoever without any kind of check or balance, without any kind of accountability.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Tory:** We'll get to that.

The fact is that the Premier admits that and then refuses to do anything about it, to have it looked into.

Let me quote what the Kitchener-Waterloo Record writes today: “When will the Ontario government stop treating the public with contempt.... Even if every cent went to a legitimate cause, this is a shoddy, unacceptable way to spend public money.... Premier McGuinty's government stands at a crossroads. It can retreat into a tunnel of silence and concealment. Or it can walk a straight path into the broad daylight where accountability and transparency rule. For an honourable government, for a government that knows its public duty, the choice is obvious.”

Take some responsibility. Stand up and explain why you will not bring the auditor in. Stop playing cards. Just try answering the question and taking some responsibility for yourself.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the official opposition makes reference to me playing cards. The only cards I'm playing are those that he or other members of his party have dealt me. I would ask him again whether or not he agrees with the opinion offered by the newest member of his party, who says that funding capital projects for new Canadians is “pandering to ethnic communities.”

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I want you to know that I disagree very strongly with that kind of statement. I have an entirely different outlook when it comes to supporting our immigrants. I believe that we have a shared responsibility—each and every one of us, 13 million strong here in the province of Ontario—to welcome, to greet openly and warmly our new arrivals and to make sure they have in place the supports they need to find opportunity to achieve their greatest potential, whatever that might be.

That is a decidedly different approach from that brought by the party opposite. If I'm wrong, I would ask the leader of the official opposition again to denounce and renounce that statement made by the newest member of his party.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** I'll offer a bargain to the Premier: I will stand in my place and suggest to you that I do not accept the characterization Mr. Hillier made of the vast majority of those grants, and I'll ask you—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister of Energy.

The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** I'll ask you in return, when you see the taxpayers' money being used to fund a grant of \$250,000 to the Bengali Cultural Society, thanks to a meeting with Maria Minna; a grant of \$200,000 to the Iranian-Canadian Community Centre, thanks to its extensive, incredible ties to the Liberal Party campaign chair, the Deputy Premier and other assorted Liberal supporters; a grant of \$275,000 to another organization that has ties to the office of another of your ministers—won't you admit that it is time we had the Auditor General in to clear the air on this so that some of the groups you're talking about today, and so am I, do not have their reputations besmirched by the kinds of things that have happened in respect of some of these groups that clearly used back channels, secret channels, unknown channels, to get public money? Won't you agree that we need the auditor to look at this?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** If anybody is besmirching the names of individuals associated with these organizations, or the organizations themselves, it would be the party opposite. The leader of the official opposition smeared the names of two individuals and the organization itself—the International Seniors Club of Brampton. He did that, not us. He smeared the reputation of Inter-Cultural Neighbourhood Social Services. He said that we can't trust the financial acumen of the Ontario Khalsa Darbar.

We bring a different approach to these issues. We think we have a shared, indeed profound, responsibility to reach out to new Canadians, to give them the necessary supports and to put in place the kinds of provisions that ensure they can find all the opportunity they need to succeed, whether those are English-as-a-second-language services, other kinds of opportunities that help them become quickly integrated into the economy, into our society, in our public schools, through the health care system. All those kinds of things are absolutely essential if you and I are going to make a tremendous success of this wonderful adventure on which we've embarked here in Ontario: our wonderful diversity. We remain very much committed to that success.

**The Speaker:** The leader of the third party.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. In connection with the McGuinty government slush fund, at any time since April 15, 2007, has the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration indicated to the Premier his willingness to resign?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** No, he has not, but let me just tell you what that same Share editorial said about



Minister Colle: "Minister Colle has proven that he understands that there are good, decent people who are working hard in the trenches day after day to help their fellow citizens, especially newcomers who may some day be able to do the same for others once they've established themselves.

"Many of these dedicated community workers make their contributions quietly and without fanfare, sometimes at great personal cost and sacrifice, and all they need is a little hand up.

"Minister Colle, more than any other minister from all the parties until now, gets it. He has proven that he understands the value of these front-line, grassroots organizations and the committed workers, and we laud and support him for it."

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, then my question is this: At any time since April 15, 2007, has the Premier asked the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to resign in connection with the McGuinty government's year-end slush fund?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** No, I have not, and let me tell you why. I know the opposition have devoted themselves in recent weeks to bringing a great deal of pressure to bear on Minister Colle. It would have been nice to have some of that pressure brought to bear in terms of bringing more supports to our immigration services, but that was not to be.

Let me just tell you that I've had the opportunity to watch Minister Colle at close hand. He's responsible for a brand new ministry, the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, and he's charged with reaching out to new Canadians—not an easy thing to do, especially when you're breaking new ground. We have admitted that we could and should—and we have, in fact—improve the process when it comes to putting out capital dollars. But nobody is more committed, nobody is more dedicated, more—

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Premier. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, I want to quote from today's Sudbury Star editorial, where they say your government has been playing "fast and loose with public funds" and the fact is that neither you nor the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has felt it's important that someone be held accountable for this. In the words of the Sudbury Star, they ask the question, in relation to the McGuinty government's slush fund: Is this refusal to hold someone accountable "arrogance," "incompetence," "misplaced goodwill" or "simple misunderstandings"? Which is it, Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** As I've had the opportunity to indicate before, we set out to do something which no other government had undertaken before. We wanted to put in place capital grants for immigration services with year-end money—not an easy thing to do, given the short amount of time you have, but we have learned from that process. Where others feared to go, we have learned that

it's more important that we have in place now a more formal application process to ensure that everybody is treated equally and fairly. We have learned from that.

I think Ontarians want to know two things from their government: first, that we remain committed to ensuring that all our new arrivals are getting the opportunities they need to succeed, that we provide the necessary funds through their immigration support services; and second, that their government from time to time admits it made a mistake, which I have done, and takes the necessary steps to improve the process, which we have also done here, and it's in place right now.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Hampton:** To the Premier: Premier, we've heard you boast a lot about accountability now and in the past, but the issue here is that \$32 million of the public's money went out the door with no announcement of a program, no formal application process, no criteria by which proposals might be evaluated or judged, no follow-up evaluation process, no follow-up auditing process, and at least some of the money, significant amounts of money, went to people well connected with the Liberal Party.

Now, you say you're all about accountability. The Minister of Citizenship says we're asking legitimate questions. I ask the Premier this: If this is about accountability and you want to boast about accountability, why has the Premier refused to allow the Auditor General to investigate and report on this until after the election? Why are you so afraid of the Auditor General looking at this and reporting it on it before the election, Premier?

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**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I believe that by any objective measure, we have moved the yardstick further than any other government when it comes to accountability. Our changes to the sunshine law have been expanded to ensure that that particular piece of legislation includes OPG and Hydro One. We have provided additional authority to the Auditor General, who can now audit hospitals, school boards, children's aid societies, the broader public sector and the like. When it comes to the freedom-of-information legislation, that has been expanded to include Hydro One, OPG and universities. I think we have done a tremendous amount when it comes to moving forward on the accountability file, and we look forward to doing more.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, we have all heard you boast about this, but this is \$32 million of government money, over two years, that went out the door—no announcement. Literally hundreds of community organizations and multicultural organizations across this province that would have liked to apply were never told; some, like the Hindu temple in Hamilton, were told, "No, there's no program. There's no money available, and even though you've made a request, there's nothing here for you." That's really what people want to know. For you to boast about accountability but then in the next breath to refuse to allow the Auditor General to examine how \$32 million went out the door with no accountability process, for you to refuse to allow that until after the election, suggests to



people that you have something to hide. Why is the Premier so afraid of the Auditor General's examining and reporting on this? What do you have to hide, Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I know we can pursue this indefinitely, and I'm more than prepared to do so. But I think what Ontarians are looking for here is some sense of our motivation in this matter, and what we're motivated by is a genuine desire to improve opportunities for new Canadians arriving in the province of Ontario to ensure that they can, as soon as possible, become integrated into the economy and into our society.

They also want to know when we've made a mistake, and I have said that as we broke new ground as a government, something no government has ever done before, which is to issue capital dollars with year-end money, we did so without having in place first a formal application process. We have now drawn a lesson from that. We have in place a formal application process, and we will continue to do what we feel we need to do to ensure that new arrivals, our immigrants, have those opportunities they need to succeed.

**Mr. Hampton:** You speak about motivation. The former federal Liberal government, under Jean Chrétien, used to say that the motivation was national unity, and therefore nobody should ask about tens of millions of dollars that went out the door with no accountability process—until it was discovered that most money went to Liberal Party organizers and Liberal Party backroom people.

My question here, Premier, and the Toronto Star asked this question: "Accountability and transparency should not be treated as an afterthought"—after you get caught. "McGuinty should bring in the Auditor General without delay." Premier, if you're really concerned about accountability and transparency, why is the Premier so opposed to the Auditor General examining and reporting on the \$32-million slush fund until after the election? What are you afraid of between now and the election, Premier? That the Auditor General might issue a report saying there was—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Premier.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I think it would be helpful for the leader of the NDP to hear again what that editorial said from Share newspaper. It said, "We understand the politics at play here. We understand that the Conservatives and the NDP will grasp at any opportunity to try and embarrass the governing Liberals, especially with an election a few months away. What we don't find amusing is they're using needed assistance to minority communities to further their political ends.

I understand that their objective is to throw mud. If there are innocents hurt along the way, that's not something they have particular regard for."

We have acknowledged that there's a problem. The problem has to do with the process. We've addressed that in a very specific way. That has now been fixed. But we will continue to give expression to our resolve to help new Canadians find the opportunities they need right here in the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker:** New question. The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** My question is for the Premier, and the real objective here is to try to bring about a shred of accountability with respect to how the taxpayers' money is dealt with.

The Premier talked about motivation. Let's talk about motivation with respect to the \$200,000 that was given to the Iranian-Canadian Community Centre. Here's how it breaks down.

The group registers as an animal welfare charity, with its head office being the office of a Liberal riding association president. Three weeks later, it gets \$200,000 sent to the home of a friend of the Liberal campaign chair, who is also the Minister of Finance. All seven directors of the organization have made donations to the Liberal Party. One of them is a riding association president, another one is a Liberal candidate, and a third is a former staff member in the office of the Minister of Health.

This is no different from the people who were involved in the Gomery mess trying to justify it on the basis that it was about national unity.

Why won't you, in light of these kinds of facts and optics, agree to bring in the auditor to clear the air? If there's nothing wrong with any of this, if this is as it should be, what is the Premier afraid of, in terms of bringing the auditor in to have a look at what looks like a very stinky mess indeed?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I want to read from a letter sent by SPRINT, Senior People's Resources in North Toronto, which received some year-end money. The letter was sent to Minister Colle by Jane Moore, the executive director. She says, in part:

"SPRINT is having some painting done. The painter came to me and warmly introduced himself and said: 'I am extremely pleased to be here at SPRINT on a painting job because 16 years ago I was a newcomer to Canada, spoke English poorly and was not able to land a job.

"It was suggested to me that I do some volunteer work and so I came to SPRINT. I served as a weekly "friendly visitor" to a 99-year-old man for over a year. The man's daughter asked me if I'd paint her house. I did and now I have a small painting business with several men working for me—thank you SPRINT!"

That's the kind of organization we are seeking to support, so that they, in turn, can offer supports to new Canadians so that they can enjoy success, raise their families with a sense of dignity and contribute to the quality of life that we all enjoy here in Ontario.

**Mr. Tory:** Let me try to continue to ask about the Iranian Canadian society. We listed a bunch of other considerations.

We find that in September and October of 2005, Reza Moridi, director of the Iranian-Canadian Community Centre and a Liberal candidate in Richmond Hill, received a patronage appointment from this government to the Royal College of Dental Surgeons; David Farmani, president of the Richmond Hill Liberal riding asso-



ciation, received an appointment to the College of Physicians and Surgeons; Mandana Motamedi received an appointment, also as director, to the council of the College of Optometrists of Ontario; and Meysa Maleki received a patronage appointment to the council of the College of Nurses of Ontario.

So what we have here, in this one organization that got a cheque for \$200,000, are seven directors, seven donors to the Liberal Party, four patronage appointments, one minister's staffer, one candidate, one riding association president who received a cheque at home for \$200,000.

The time is clearly now for this Premier to stand up and say, "It's time to have some accountability. It's time to bring in the auditor to have a look at this." If there's nothing wrong, why would the Premier possibly object to having the auditor clear the air once and for all?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I'm proud to report that the Iranian community is 140,000 strong now in Ontario. They continue to grow. They are strongly present especially in the GTA, 905 and York regions. We are interested in building new supports for that community and so many other communities. The leader of the official opposition doesn't support this.

We continue to insist that we must find ways to support new Canadians, to give them those opportunities that they need.

I've acknowledged that there was a problem with the process. We have now rectified that problem. It is now more formalized. It is in place.

We all should share at least a sense of responsibility to reach out to these communities, whether it's the Iranian community, the Indo-Canadian community, the Chinese Canadian community or whatever. They're here, they're part of our broader community, and we will continue to support them.

1500

#### YEAR-END GRANTS

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, this morning you refused to answer questions of the press when they asked which ministries, besides citizenship, you give money to which was subsequently doled out. The minister also refused to disclose the total amount of monies doled out in slush-fund style for the past two years. Will the minister please inform this House, today, how much money was made available for the fiscal years ending 2005-06 and 2006-07, and to which ministries was it distributed, who subsequently doled it out?

**Hon. Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** It would be useless to suggest to my friend that he misconstrued what I said this morning. I don't want to be unkind to him. I simply want to encourage him to look at the budget that was presented on March 22. If he were to actually read the budget, here's what he'd find: For 2006-07, the government was originally projecting a deficit of \$2.4 billion. During the course of that year, the in-year

expenses—let's go to the in-year revenue changes first. The in-year revenue changes amounted to \$3.4 billion. That's because the Ontario economy was producing more strongly than we predicted. If he would just turn the page, then, to page 125, he would see a full summary of in-year expenses, and they totalled, in the net, \$1.7 billion.

**Mr. Prue:** I don't know what kind of an answer that was, because in not one place in that budget does it list "slush fund" and the money you give out at the end of the year, which is not in your budget. So that is simply not adequate. The finance minister doesn't know or won't say how much slush fund money went out at the year end. That's the question that is being asked—not what was in your budget, but the slush fund at the end of the year.

My question is a simple one: How is this open and transparent if the Minister of Finance refuses to disclose who got what out of the slush fund? When is he going to make it public—all of the ministries that handed out slush funds at the end of the past two fiscal years?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** My friend just doesn't get it. I understand their desire—it's gardening season, so get some mud and fling it wherever they can. I suggest to him, simply, he do two things: first, read the budget or the summary; and, second, if he has the capacity, I would invite him to visit the website of every ministry in government, where every single in-year expenditure is itemized, hundreds of them—hospices in Hamilton, community centres in Niagara Falls, a new convention centre in the city of Niagara Falls. Every single one of those expenditures is available for my friend to see and 13 million Ontarians to see. That's openness and transparency.

#### RURAL EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** My question is for the Minister of Education. Minister, education in rural Ontario is a particular challenge for many reasons relating to geographic location. We inherited a very flawed funding formula from the previous government, which took the funding and divided it in a one-size-fits-all approach. We on this side of the House understand that there are unique areas in rural Ontario that are unable to thrive on this approach. Can you please advise my constituents how we are ensuring rural schools have the resources they need to ensure students' success?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** I want to thank the member for Northumberland for his advocacy but also for the work he does with the individual schools in his riding and the support that he gives them for publicly funded education. One of the hallmarks of education in Ontario has been that whether you go to Cobourg or whether you go to Kenora or whether you go to downtown Toronto, you see schools that have excellent teachers, excellent resources and kids getting an opportunity that is similar across the province. That is a hallmark that we have worked to maintain, so



we've been changing the funding formula since we came into office. Last year we put in place a school foundation grant that guarantees small schools a principal and a secretary; this year we put in place a supported schools grant that guarantees that small schools and isolated schools have enough teachers to deliver the program that they need. We will continue to do that, and this year funding for rural boards will increase by \$114 million, or 3.6%, despite declining enrolment.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** As you are aware, we are now squarely facing the issue of declining enrolment in the province. Between 2002 and 2007, 52 school boards declined in enrolment, which fell by 2.5%. Between 2007 and 2011, 56 school boards are projecting a decline in enrolment of another 2.5%. With these statistics, many of my constituents are worried about possible school closures. The previous government closed 503 public schools, while 266 private schools opened, even though they did not face declining enrolment as we do today. What are we doing to ensure good schools in rural Ontario remain open?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** We've listened very closely to the concerns of rural communities. We placed a moratorium on school closures until we could develop a process. We put in place pupil accommodation review guidelines that require boards to look at the value of schools, not just in terms of program—although program is paramount—but also in terms of the economic value to community and the services that can be delivered out of a school. That idea of a school as a hub is embedded in our pupil accommodation review guidelines. Those guidelines also require that boards consult with and make transparent the process around any kind of consolidation or school closure. In fact, we've provided \$2.5 million for a new school in the member's own riding of Cobourg, St. Mary's Secondary School.

Again, in the face of declining enrolment, we have continued to invest in new schools. One of the frontiers of publicly funded education in this province is the demographic shift. I visit schools where the kids in kindergarten are half the number of the kids in grade 6. We're all going to have to work on that as we go forward.

#### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Premier. The Premier characterizes the opposition's call for accountability and transparency as political opportunism. I'd like to read the following to the Premier: "We respectfully demand that full investigations of this transaction be undertaken so as to safeguard the interests of members of the Iranian-Canadian community in Ontario."

That is not the call of the official opposition or the third party; it is the call of 13 signatories to a letter addressed to the Premier, which I trust he's seen by now, calling for an investigation because they don't like what

has happened in the Richmond Hill. When they have asked Mr. Reza, the now candidate, to explain where this money is, he has refused to meet with them.

Will the Premier explain to us why he isn't prepared to give the investigation that they have asked for to the people of Richmond Hill?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I know that the member opposite has been engaging in all kinds of speculation—sometimes very reckless speculation. What I've said again to him is that there was a lack of services in the Iranian community, and that community is growing in numbers, especially in that part of the province. They needed support services, they needed a focal point, and we invested in partners to try and develop that, because it hasn't been there since 2000. That's the investment we made in trying to meet that need.

1510

**Mr. Klees:** Interesting. Here's what this group, the Iranian-Canadian community in Richmond Hill, had to say about the organization that got the \$200,000: "To the best of our knowledge the designated group that received the funding had no prior experience of promoting the welfare or safeguarding the interests of Iranian-Canadians in Ontario."

I say to the minister: How can it be justified that \$200,000 is now sitting in a bank account and the minister allowed My Canada, who were providing services, to shut their doors? What was the difference? My Canada had to shut its doors; \$200,000 was given to an organization with no experience. How can the minister justify that?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** This minister has tried this before, putting one group against another. When I told him specifically—

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** Former minister.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** When he was the former minister in that government, he never even mentioned the words "newcomers" or "immigration." What we have done successfully is ensured that now \$920 million is available in Ontario for all groups, for all services, like ISAP, the host program, the settlement workers in schools program. Those millions of dollars are now available in York region, in Toronto, in Sudbury, for groups all across the board that we fought for. That's where the resources are and that's what we achieved.

**The Speaker:** New question. The member for Beaches—East York.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York):** My question is to the Premier. Mr. Premier, two or three times today, you have quoted from the editorial in Share newspaper. What you haven't done, though, is quoted the title of the editorial, which is "Using the Race Card," and what you have not quoted are a couple of sentences in here specifically about you that say, "Maybe the Premier



was implying that their behaviour was racist. And if he was, he was probably right." Will the Premier explain if you endorse this part of the editorial as well?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** As I said before, the investments that we've made in many diverse groups across the province—and some of those diverse groups have a heritage that goes back to 1850, right up to the new groups coming from countries—we made those investment to try and ensure that they integrated into Ontario in a continuum. That's what we did. The principle of helping newcomers is what we base the principle on.

The opposition has raised questions, legitimate questions, and I've said from the beginning, I accept their criticism and I accept their questions as being legitimate. That's what we've been focusing on: how to best achieve those results to ensure that everybody feels part of this great province.

**Mr. Prue:** My question is back to Premier, because it is the Premier who quotes this particular editorial called "Using the Race Card," from Share newspaper. I quote again, and I'd like the Premier to answer this, when the editorialist writes, "Maybe the Premier was implying that their behaviour was racist. And if he was, he was probably right." There have been a lot of things said in this House over the last couple of weeks, including by the Premier, who was forced to nearly apologize for making that statement. I ask him today, since he's so proud to quote this editorial in the Legislature, are you also endorsing what it says about the opposition? That is my question.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** The opposition has been quoting from all kinds of editorials—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order.

Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** As I said, the opposition has been quoting from all kinds of articles and editorials. What the Premier has said emphatically is that this is about trying to improve the plight of many Ontarians who have been left out, helping Ontarians who have been ignored, who come to this country with two Ph.D.s and get doors slammed in their faces. That's what we've raised.

The leader of the third party has emphatically said, about the investment we've made in many of these newcomer settlement agencies, that these agencies were fly-by-night. That's what we object to.

## PUBLIC LIBRARIES

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** My question is for the Minister of Culture. Recently, we announced some good news for some of our small rural libraries. I have a strong belief in the need for small local libraries to serve smaller rural communities that otherwise would only be served by larger urban centres.

In my riding, we have libraries in Bonfield, where we recently celebrated some good news with some infrastructure funding; in Callander, where I participated with

the Friends of the Library in various fundraisers; in Mattawa, where we've moved the community library into the local high school, and what a great contribution that's making to the entire community. Most recently, I was in the Powassan library during the Maple Syrup Festival, which was a great event this year. They're doing some great work there and becoming a real hub of the community they serve.

All of these libraries are served by their Friends of the Library organizations, and they're doing some great work in our smaller communities. I'd like to ask the minister to please advise us how we are supporting these small rural libraries across the province.

**Hon. Caroline Di Cocco (Minister of Culture):** I want to thank the member from Nipissing for her question. I'm certainly pleased that Ontario's public libraries are receiving a one-time investment of \$5 million. This investment will help to strengthen 260 rural, remote and First Nations libraries that serve communities of less than 20,000 people.

The six libraries in the riding of Nipissing, as the member has mentioned, will receive \$54,000 in new funding. What this means is that most of the \$5 million is going to exactly the kind of smaller rural libraries the member is speaking about. We're proud to make these types of investments, because this government clearly understands the value of supporting our libraries and our rural communities.

**Ms. Smith:** Thank you, Minister, for highlighting these important investments in my riding. My constituents and, I know, those of my colleagues in other ridings will be very pleased to know that this government has seen and is meeting their needs.

But even though these types of direct investments are important, I know we're doing much more for our libraries in our smaller communities. Again I'd like to ask the minister: What sort of long-term support are we providing to rural libraries, not only in my riding but across the province?

**Hon. Ms. Di Cocco:** While we did meet valid needs in our recent \$5-million investment to smaller rural libraries, our support to the sector goes well beyond this. For example, our recent investments in the Knowledge Ontario program will allow libraries across the province to purchase digital library resources, including computers and educational materials. In many cases, smaller communities now have the same level of access electronically to materials that their larger urban counterparts enjoy.

Also benefiting rural communities, my ministry provides ongoing funding to over 50 First Nations libraries. As many of the libraries are community hubs, they also provide services from our Service Ontario program, giving rural communities access to many government services without having to travel to urban centres.

## MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier, and I hope the Premier will



decide that he should answer this question himself, because he has been quoting today in this House from an editorial in the *Share* newspaper and using this as his justification for not calling in the Auditor General.

Just a few days ago, the Premier was moved to issue a statement of regret after he implied that members on this side of the House, from both parties, were racist for asking questions about this slush fund, although, throughout, his members have continued to make these accusations in various ways.

My question for the Premier is this: What happened to the statement of regret? Will you stand in your place, right here and right now, and apologize for making these kinds of insinuations and accusations that are beneath the office you hold as Premier of this province?

1520

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** If there is something that I hope we can all agree on, it is that we have a shared responsibility. There are, I think, 140,000 new Canadians arriving in the province on an annual basis. That is a huge number. As I enjoy the privilege of doing a little bit of travel on behalf of Ontarians, when I tell people in other jurisdictions that 27% of the people living in our province were born outside the country and 52% of the people living in our provincial capital were born outside the country, they are amazed.

I like to think that all of us—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. Premier.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** It's a dimension, a characteristic of our province that is exceptional. I would argue, it gives us a huge competitive advantage. I would also argue that with that diversity comes a special responsibility to make sure that we continue to get this right. That requires that we find ways, on an ongoing basis, to provide supports to our new arrivals so that they enjoy opportunities, so that they can succeed and look their kids in the eye and say, "We've picked the right place to come to. I've got a good job. I'm earning a decent standard of living. We're finding opportunities for success here in Ontario, Canada." We remain committed to those kinds of ideals. We're informed by those values.

**Mr. Tory:** I would suggest that those words about the shared responsibility ring very hollow indeed when you will not stand up in this House and apologize for the fact that you have not only said things yourself that insinuated and directly suggested that people in both parties on this side of the House are racist in some way or other for asking questions about accountability; furthermore, you have—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** Not only won't you come in here and explain yourself and apologize for having made that insinuation, if you really believe that we have that shared responsibility and that we share in the belief that that is our responsibility here, but then you also won't, in

response to a question from the member for Beaches—East York, explain this. You quoted over and over again an editorial that you obviously feel very strongly is completely correct. It says the following: "Maybe the Premier was implying that their behaviour was racist. And, if he was, he was probably right. Why else would they focus on these small grants to people of colour?"

You were given several opportunities by the member for Beaches—East York to get up and disassociate yourself with that suggestion of an editorial you quoted three or four times in here today. Will you get up and do it now and apologize for what you yourself said earlier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** There is a difference between the government and the Conservative Party, and the differences lies in the extent of our commitment, the extent of our devotion, the extent of our resolve, the extent of our determination to provide opportunities to new Canadians.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Premier.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** We believe that it's important for us, in order to be competitive, to be at our best, and that means 13 million strong. That means ensuring that those 140,000 who arrive on an annual basis can become integrated into our society at the earliest possible opportunity, enjoy a good quality of life, earn a decent standard of living, that they can continue to practise their faith, enjoy their culture, celebrate their traditions, and make an ongoing powerful and positive contribution to the quality of life that we all enjoy. That's an informing ideal of ours. It's a value set that we share on this side of the House and it's something that we will continue to embrace.

**The Speaker:** New question. The member for Parkdale—High Park.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale—High Park):** My question is for the Premier. I am going to read from a letter dated January 22, 2007—one of many that was directed to his office.

"Funding for the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO) comes to an end in September 2007. After September 2007, the fastest-growing community in the GTA—the South Asian community—will be denied access to legal services that are affordable...."

"The South Asian community ... is the largest visible minority group in Ontario" and the "fastest-growing group" in the GTA.

So I ask: If the McGuinty government really is standing by its criteria for multicultural groups—this is the fastest-growing and the largest visible minority group in Ontario—why did they not meet his criteria? Why did he not fund them out of this year-end slush fund?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I'm glad to answer that question, because the two largest settlement groups that are coming into Ontario are coming from China and South Asia. That's why we've taken extra steps to increase our funding and



partner with organizations like AWIC, the Brampton Multicultural Community Centre, CultureLink, the India Rainbow Community Services of Peel. That's why we're supporting organizations across Ontario that service that large-growing area, especially in the region of Peel. We're doing that in a way never done before. Especially with the federal grants, all these agencies are hiring more people and expanding programs too.

**Ms. DiNovo:** You know, in the eight months that I've been here, I've seen the McGuinty Liberals smear my reputation in a by-election, I've seen them stonewall for the OLG—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Order.

Member for Parkdale–High Park.

**Ms. DiNovo:** I fear I've touched a nerve. Not only did they smear my reputation during a campaign—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The second I sit down doesn't mean you can start to make noise. I will be naming the next member who makes any noise.

The member for Parkdale–High Park.

**Ms. DiNovo:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. They are also very fond of shouting down a woman.

To the Premier again: This is a government that has smeared a reputation, my reputation, my family and my congregation—that was within eight months—and then we had the stonewalling through the OLG scandal. Now we have a slush fund. Again, all the opposition wants to know is about the criteria and about worthy groups like SALCO who did not meet that criteria.

So the question, finally, is: Why won't they open the books? Why won't they be transparent? Why won't they be accountable? Why won't they call in the auditor so the people of Ontario can see what's real and what's not?

**The Speaker:** There have been a number of questions asked. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** First of all, this is the same member who voted against a \$51-million increase to the legal aid budget. She voted against that. She has to explain that to the people in her riding, why she voted against the legal aid budget.

She also has to explain what her party did to Bob Hunter. Explain what they did to Bob Hunter.

Then she has to understand that we've made investments in the South Asian community that were long overdue, like the Ontario Khalsa Darbar. Many newcomers coming from South Asia are in the greater Toronto area without proper support. They're relying on the food bank at the Ontario Khalsa Darbar. They can't get ahead. We are trying to reach out to them. Never have they had anybody listen to them before. We are proud of the work we're doing with agencies of those major communities all across Ontario. Especially with the South Asian community, we're reaching out with excellent organizations like the Brampton Multicultural Community Centre, which is a

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

1530

## RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** My question is to the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal. First, I wish to thank you for coming to Winchester in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh recently for a visit. That visit was an excellent opportunity for you to see first-hand 100 Club Park, where this government's funding is soon to be used in the redevelopment of recreational facilities there. This was one of six funding announcements for my riding under the rural infrastructure investment initiative. These projects are in addition to the more than \$4 million that the townships in my riding received through the Move Ontario program.

This government has demonstrated its commitment to infrastructure development in rural Ontario by investing in roads, bridges and other projects that were allowed to decline under the previous government.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Could you highlight some of the other initiatives this government has undertaken to support rural Ontario communities like those in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh?

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I am very pleased to respond to the question from the member from Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh because he knows that this government understands and supports rural communities with a range of choices to meet their infrastructure priorities. That's why, with our federal and municipal partners, we have the COMRIF program, which will realize over \$900 million of road, water, waste water and recreation projects. That's why, through Infrastructure Ontario, we've arranged for more than \$2 billion of low-cost financing for municipalities for infrastructure needs.

That's why each municipality received part of Move Ontario, a \$400-million program through our government.

That's why, at a time when there was uncertainty about federal investment after the last COMRIF intake, we established R3 and doubled its amount to \$140 million to help realize 190 projects valued at more than \$268 million.

I want to commend this member, Mr. Brownell, and my parliamentary assistant, the member from Huron–Bruce, Ms. Mitchell, for their advocacy and hard work when it comes to rural Ontario and meeting the infrastructure needs across this province.

## ORDER AND DECORUM IN CHAMBER

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I would remind members that we are in a place that requires civility, a bit of maturity. Question period was leaving those bounds today, and it won't happen tomorrow.



I would also remind members that questions need to be placed through the Speaker. That means they will be placed in the third person. Tomorrow I will not be allowing as much latitude as I did today.

## PETITIONS

### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario already signed by thousands of people in my riding, including Gordon MacKenzie of my hometown of Barry's Bay.

"Petition to the Parliament of Ontario

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore I, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I support this, affix my signature and send it to the table with Zachary.

### COMMUNITY COLLEGES COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** I have thousands and thousands of names on this petition that I'm submitting.

"Right to Collective Bargaining for Part-time Workers at Ontario Colleges

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the right to join a union and to fully participate in free collective bargaining is recognized by the United Nations through its International Labour Organization as a fundamental human right; and

"Whereas part-time workers at Ontario's colleges are by law excluded from the right to collective bargaining by the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act; and

"Whereas comparable part-time workers at the province's universities and secondary schools have the right to free collective bargaining; and

"Whereas these part-time college workers do the same work as their full-time counterparts; and

"Whereas this work is often performed without comparable rights and remuneration; and

"Whereas these workers are subject to discriminatory treatment by their employer; and

"Whereas Ontario is the only province in Canada to deny this basic right to part-time college workers; and

"Whereas there is no rationale for denying bargaining rights to these employees; and

"Whereas the abuse of part-time workers is having an impact on the quality of education college students receive;

"We, the undersigned, petition the province of Ontario to extend full collective bargaining rights to part-time college workers."

I support this petition very, very strongly and I'll be signing it.

### LAKERIDGE HEALTH

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has directed Lakeridge Health to cut mental health and addiction services and children's mental health services in order to balance its budget; and

"Whereas the ministry has directed these cuts, bypassing the Central East Local Health Integration Network, whose director has stated, 'There will be no reduction in mental health and addiction services within the Central East LHIN'; and

"Whereas these cuts will likely transfer costs rather than save them, putting additional pressure on Lakeridge's emergency department, Durham police, Whitby Mental Health and social service providers; and

"Whereas the Central East already receives amongst the lowest per capita hospital funding in the province;

"We, the undersigned, request the Ontario Legislative Assembly to revisit this decision and ensure Durham residents receive appropriate support for adults and children who need treatment for mental health and addictions."

I affix my name in support.

### NÉGOCIATION COLLECTIVE DANS LES COLLÈGES COMMUNAUTAIRES

**M. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** J'ai une pétition : « Le droit à la négociation collective pour les travailleuses et travailleurs à temps partiel des collèges de l'Ontario.

« À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu que le droit d'adhésion à un syndicat et le fait de prendre part à la négociation collective de manière libre et entière est reconnu par les Nations Unies, par le truchement de l'Organisation internationale du travail, une de ces institutions spécialisées, comme un droit de la personne fondamental; et

« Attendu que les travailleuses et les travailleurs à temps partiel des collèges de l'Ontario n'ont pas droit à la négociation collective en vertu de la Loi sur la négociation collective dans les collèges; et



« Attendu que les travailleuses et travailleurs occupant des postes équivalents dans les écoles secondaires et les universités de la province ont droit à une libre négociation collective; et

« Attendu que ces travailleuses et travailleurs à temps partiel des collèges effectuent le même type de travail que leurs homologues à temps plein; et

« Attendu que ce travail est souvent accompli sans qu'ils bénéficient de droit et d'une rémunération équivalente à ceux de leurs homologues; et

« Attendu que ces travailleuses et travailleurs peuvent faire l'objet d'un traitement discriminatoire de la part de leur employeur; et

« Canada à nier ce droit élémentaire aux travailleuses et travailleurs à temps partiel des collèges; et

« Attendu qu'il n'existe aucun motif pour nier des droits de négociation à ces employées et employés; et

« Attendu que l'augmentation du nombre de travailleuses et travailleurs à temps partiel a une répercussion sur la qualité de l'éducation que les étudiantes et étudiants reçoivent;

« Nous, soussignés, présentons cette pétition à la province de l'Ontario afin que les travailleuses et travailleurs à temps partiel des collèges bénéficient de droits complets à la négociation collective. »

J'appuie cette pétition et je vais la signer.

1540

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** I'm pleased to have a petition that has been pre-certified by the Clerk's office. I'm hoping all of the rest that went in today were, or they'd be returned, I'm sure. It is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the proposed Long-Term Care Homes Act is extremely lengthy and complex and requires full and extensive parliamentary and public debate and committee hearings throughout the province; and

"Whereas the rigid, pervasive and detailed framework proposed is excessive and will stifle innovation and flexibility in the long-term-care sector; and

"Whereas the additional burden, red tape and punitive measures imposed by the proposed legislation will aggravate ... the chronic underfunding of the sector, to the detriment of residents of the homes; and

"Whereas the proposed legislation will have serious implications for the viability of the for-profit and not-for-profit, charitable and municipal long-term-care sectors;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We demand that the McGuinty government withdraw the proposed act, or remove the offending sections, and fulfill its commitment by a substantial increase in funding on a multi-year basis in the order of the promised \$6,000 per resident, per year."

I have affixed my signature.

#### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I'm pleased to present a petition on behalf of the riding of Durham which reads as follows:

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I am pleased to sign this petition in support and present it to Lauren.

#### GAS WELLS

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** Another petition entitled "Preserve Our Gas Wells." It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas southern Ontario has had a localized gas well industry since the 1840s; and

"Whereas gas wells provide an efficient form of heat and energy for rural landowners and farmers; and

"Whereas inconsistent bureaucratic interpretation of regulations and often antagonistic enforcement measures threaten the financial viability of this natural resource;

"We, the undersigned, request as follows:

"That the McGuinty government investigate the Ministry of Natural Resources petroleum division, and direct civil servants to work proactively and positively with landowners and farmers to review the government's approach based on the following principles:

"(a) respect for property owners, and

"(b) consistent and fair treatment of gas well owners."

Underneath is the signature of James Houlden, and I sign as well in support.

#### CONDOMINIUMS

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** I have about 100 names from two condominiums.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the current Condominium Act, 1998, is ineffective in protecting the rights of condominium residents; and

"Whereas the current Condominium Act, 1998, no longer addresses the changing nature of condominium builders, development and communities in Ontario since 1998; and



"Whereas issues such as a condominium review board, standard provisions for declarations and good-faith disclosure do not constitute any part of the act; and

"Whereas the amendments proposed in Bill 185, the Condominium Amendment Act, best deal with the shortcomings of the act through the creation of a condominium review board, give a voice to condominium residents, enforce the Condominium Act, advocate on behalf of condo dwellers, provide necessary information, assist condo owners to review documentation and resolve disputes faster, more affordably and without going to court; and

"Whereas Bill 185, the Condominium Amendment Act, will introduce standard provisions for declarations in order to ensure transparency before prospective buyers purchase a home, enabling them to read for themselves what they're signing; and

"Whereas Bill 185, the Condominium Amendment Act, will incorporate good-faith disclosure (similar to the franchise disclosure act), forcing developers to pay damages when they fail to disclose information;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support and pass Bill 185, the Condominium Amendment Act."

I am a strong believer in, and supporter of, this particular bill, given that I'm the author, and I'm going to sign it.

## EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My petition is submitted from many residents from Thornhill and a number of Toronto families. I read it because the member from Thornhill will not do so.

"Petition to Ontario Legislature to End Discrimination

"Whereas the Ontario government already fully funds 93% of faith-based schools in Ontario, but the remaining 7% receive no funding, solely because they are not Catholic;

"Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Committee ruled in 1999 and again in 2005 that this arrangement is discriminatory and violates basic international human rights law that Ontario formally agreed to uphold;

"Whereas all three parties represented in the Legislature support Catholic separate school funding, as guaranteed by the Constitution of Canada, so that the only fair and viable solution to the discrimination is to extend funding to the small religious minorities that are currently excluded;

"Whereas the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that Ontario has the constitutional power to provide funding to non-Catholic faith-based schools;

"Whereas Ontario is the only Western democracy that fully funds faith-based schools of one religion to the total exclusion of all other religions, while all other provinces except the Atlantic provinces fund faith-based schools and have thriving public school systems;

"Whereas the cultural survival of the affected minority groups is at stake;

"Whereas faith-based schools produce responsible and productive citizens; and

"Whereas the Multi-Faith Coalition for Equal Funding of Religious Schools in December 2004 submitted to the Minister of Education a detailed proposal for the funding of non-Catholic faith-based schools in a manner that is fair and accountable and protects and enhances the public interest;

"We call on the Ontario Legislature to pass legislation to provide equitable funding in respect of all faith-based schools in Ontario without religious discrimination and without any reduction in funding for public education, with accountability requirements and standards in place to ensure that the public interest is safeguarded."

I am pleased to put my signature to this petition. I support it totally, and I hand it off to page Safa for a presentation to the table.

## POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington):** "Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I agree with this petition. I affix my name thereto and I will give it to page Doug.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### BUDGET MEASURES AND INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 SUR LES MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES ET L'AFFECTATION ANTICIPÉE DE CRÉDITS

Mr. Sorbara moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 187, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters / Projet de loi 187, Loi concernant les mesures budgétaires, l'affectation anticipée de crédits et d'autres questions.

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I don't think we have a quorum in the House.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Is there a quorum present?

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** A quorum is not present, Speaker.

*The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.*

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**The Deputy Clerk:** A quorum is now present, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker:** The Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do you think they came in because they knew I was going to be speaking on the budget? I don't think so. I know my friend Mr. Marchese—oh, I'm sorry; the member from Trinity-Spadina—is here for that reason.

I just want to mention at the outset of my remarks that I will be sharing the time allotted to me with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Pickering-Ajax. So if you see me going over about 15 minutes, sir, I wouldn't mind if you would just ask me to bring my remarks to a conclusion and cede the floor to my friend from Pickering-Ajax.

I have been talking about this budget and this budget bill for quite some time and I'm thrilled to be able to lead off third reading debate. I hope the debate proceeds expeditiously and we can pass this budget and this budget bill into law.

It is a budget that I am enormously proud of. It has been almost three years and eight months since we were first elected. When we were elected, we inherited some pretty desperate financial circumstances. Let me be simple about this: This province was in serious trouble. I think every member of this Parliament knows and most Ontarians know that we found ourselves confronted with a \$5.6-billion deficit. Over the course of three years and eight months now, we've been working as hard as we can to bring this province back to financial health, and with the budget I presented on March 22, we were able to do that.

In fact, in that budget, and the projections for the two out-years, the results will be that Ontario will, for the first time in decade and decades, have five years of consecutive surpluses. That's a tribute to the hard-working people of this province and the way in which they have industriously created a stronger economy.

When I presented the budget, I spoke about Ontario's new economic strength. I just want to say that Ontario's new economic strength is reflected in the fact that we're out of that period now of debilitating deficits and we're into a period of sustainable surpluses. It gives our government the capacity to do so much more, particularly in the area of enhancing the quality of public services.

I'm so proud of the additional investments we've been able to make in our education system. Our schools are better places to learn. You ask anyone who follows education and they'll talk to you about the crisis in education four years ago.

In the budget, we were able to make additional investments in health care. You ask anyone who follows

health care and they will tell you that health care was in crisis in Ontario four years ago. Now we've got a system that is so much more responsive. It's a system that is in the process of transformation, led by my colleague the Minister of Health. Just a few statistics: a record number of young men and women entering medical school; a record number of graduates; some 10,000 new nurses working in the health care system right across the province. And the figure that strikes me most profoundly is that more than 500,000 Ontarians who did not have a family doctor four years ago now have a family doctor.

This budget was designed to inspire expanded economic capacity right around the province, and we took some very specific steps in order to do that.

We're legislating the elimination of the capital tax. Every economist who understands the taxation system has described the capital tax, in colloquial terms, as a job-killing tax. We've been making progress on its elimination since the day we were sworn into office. The budget bill, which I hope we'll be passing in this House, will finally eliminate the capital tax as of July 1, 2010.

We were able for the first time to make reductions to and a transformation of the business education tax system. That's going to be of enormous importance to businesses right across Ontario, including communities like Thunder Bay, London and Ottawa which have had business education tax rates which were, unfairly, much higher than even neighbouring jurisdictions. When we fully implement these reforms, we'll be relieving our businesses of a tax burden of just over half a billion dollars.

Most importantly, for the first time in over a decade in this great province, this budget was able to address issues of poverty. I remember as if it were yesterday when Mike Harris, newly elected as Premier of this province, stood up in this House and all around Ontario, proudly proclaiming that he was going to slash—I think it was by 21%—what Ontario's most vulnerable population was receiving in the form of public assistance. This was a matter of pride for the Conservative Party: that they were going to get Ontario's most vulnerable people. I tell you, the Conservatives created an atmosphere in this province where most political leaders were afraid to talk about poverty. In our budget, for the first time in over a decade, as I said, we've started to address fundamentally the issue of poverty, and we start with poverty where it is most unacceptable, and that is in our children.

I want to repeat this, so that, I hope, I can finally convince Conservatives and New Democrats to vote for this budget: Over the course of five years, we are going to be spending some \$2.1 billion assisting Ontario's most vulnerable children with the Ontario child benefit. Have we done it all? Absolutely not. We're just beginning to feel this sense of new economic strength, and we have a lot more to do. But the course that we have taken over the past almost four years gives us that economic capacity.

It wasn't just with child poverty that this budget addressed Ontario's most vulnerable populations. We made specific provisions for some 155,000 injured



workers whose benefits had been falling short to receive more from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board: increases of 7.5% over the course of three years. That community had been crying out for years for a better deal and a fairer deal.

We were also able to address, with an additional allotment of some \$200 million, services to Ontario's developmentally handicapped populations. I invite members to visit a group home for developmentally disabled people anywhere in the province, our associations for community living. Go and see the work that is going on there and how challenging it is. Ask them how difficult things have become; ask them how important it is that this budget passes.

We were also able to improve the legal aid system. Legal aid is what helps Ontario's most vulnerable people when they're thrust into the court process. That system was fracturing, and we've turned that around with this budget.

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So I'm just so extremely proud of what we've been able to do for Ontario's most vulnerable populations and how, at the same time, we've been able to make investments that will strengthen business right around the province and how we have been able to take systems like property assessment and transform them so that they're fairer, more transparent and more responsible to homeowners right across Ontario.

To give one final word of encouragement for the opposition party to wake up and smell the coffee and vote in favour of this budget, I just want to remind them that the leader of the official opposition, when asked bluntly what he would change in the government's budget—I am told that his response was, "I can't think of a thing," and I take that as a concession by the Leader of the Opposition that it is this budget that really speaks to the true values of the people of Ontario.

It is of note that the budget was presented almost six weeks ago, on March 22—I hope I'm doing the counting right. Maybe it's almost seven weeks. This Parliament has been sitting every sessional day since then, and not once has a member of either opposition party stood in their place and asked a question about this budget. It's really interesting. I think the whole theme in this spring session of Parliament is designed for the opposition parties to avoid the fact that the government, in its budget, has truly captured the mood and values of the people of the province.

What have they been speaking about instead? They've been speaking about year-end investments.

My budget, as well, was about year-end investments. It was about providing \$8 million for hospices around the province.

Last night, I attended a marvellous function in honour of our member from Stoney Creek, Jennifer Mossop. The people from the Dr. Bob Kemp Hospice in Hamilton were there.

Do you know what a hospice is? It's a community-based facility, a home, to provide for people in their last

days, so that if they can't be at home, they will not be dying in the sterile environment of a hospital. It's better care; it's more sensitive care.

What did the folks from the Dr. Bob Kemp Hospice in Hamilton say to me last night? It touched me greatly. They said, "You have made an incredible difference in the lives of our frail and elderly right across Ontario."

Only \$8 million, in this case, in this budget, and we're starting once again to build a system of hospices that can provide for our moms and dads as they prepare to leave the planet.

I was in Niagara Falls earlier on—well, close to Niagara Falls. I want to tell you about year-end investments, and I want to tell you how proud I was that we were able to make a year-end investment in the city of Niagara Falls, which will mean the creation of a very important new convention centre there so that the full potential of tourism can be realized in Niagara Falls.

I was down in the area of Welland and, because I was in Welland, talking about the agricultural industry down there. I was incredibly proud of the fact that our year-end investment in our budget could make a \$12.5-million investment in the Vineland Research Station.

Why did we do that? Not because the application procedure was absolutely perfect, but because that community, and its agricultural community in particular, said, "We need this assistance to do the research necessary to make sure that our farmers and our grape growers and our tender fruit industry can continue to succeed and thrive." I'm glad to say that in this case we've got a partner as well. Maybe not the opposition parties, because they think this is all money poorly spent, but the federal government said, "Yes, we agree," and they are putting in \$12.5 million as well.

I'm looking at the clock, and I could go on and on. There are so many things, so many people that we have been able to touch in a positive way, so many communities that we have been able to help—not always with a large grant. Sometimes it's \$50,000 to put in a new elevator in a community facility in a very remote community where, if they don't get it from us, they don't get it at all, and it means the difference between keeping the place open and closing.

**Interjection:** Like Aldershot.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** My friend says, "Aldershot." That's right: in Aldershot as well.

Right across Ontario, thousands and thousands of organizations have seen their aspirations reflected through the positive initiatives in this budget. Do we have more work to do? You bet your bottom dollar. The good news is, however, that this province is now on a sound course. The province's economy is strengthening. The province's finances are healthy again. If I have anything to do with it, we are going to continue down this course, not just in the months to come but in the years to come. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Durham. Excuse me, member from Durham' I have erred. The



time was to be split. The member from Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge has the floor.

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge):** I'm pleased to be able to rise today and follow whom I colloquially refer to as my boss, the Minister of Finance, in my capacity as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance. I can appreciate the member from Durham wanting to be on his feet, but as the finance minister indicated in his opening comments, he would be sharing the time allocated for us with me.

I have had the pleasure, during my time here, to serve in the capacity as parliamentary assistant to the Honourable Gerry Phillips, in what was then the Management Board Secretariat and is now government services, and then subsequently in finance, both with Minister Duncan—initially with Minister Sorbara just after he finished the 2005 budget, the budget that we refer to as the Reaching Higher plan, which focused upon post-secondary education, and subsequently with Minister Duncan and his budget with a strong emphasis on infrastructure, particularly as it related to supporting the needs of municipalities and those who use our roads and take advantage of the water and sewer capacities, as we all do in this province; and in this budget with Minister Sorbara again, in this instance focusing on a great variety of areas which he spoke so eloquently about. So it is a great pleasure in this, the fourth budget of this mandate.

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I request that you consider whether there is quorum present.

**The Acting Speaker:** Is there a quorum present?

**The Acting Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Gramum):** Quorum is present, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker:** Please continue.

**Mr. Arthurs:** I was pleased; the interjection allowed me to turn a page. My count across the floor, certainly, as the clerk identified as well, indicates that we have quorum, and if folks look around they might find that.

It is a pleasure to rise on Bill 187, at the time of third reading of our Budget Measures and Interim Appropriation Act, and speak a bit and follow on Minister Sorbara's comments.

We're building on achievements over the previous years. It is not a one-off budget, but truly it is a budget that positions us for a much brighter tomorrow than we had in the past. It is aimed at helping Ontario businesses and building on the Ontario economy, among any other number of matters.

I mentioned that when we came to office in 2003 and were faced with that first budget time frame we found ourselves in a bit of a dilemma. I suggest that those in the leadership capacity, the Premier, the Minister of Finance and cabinet—there were some difficult choices to be made—were faced with a \$5.5-billion deficit. I think they were really faced with a difficult choice of doing, in my view, one of three things. They could abandon the policy objectives of the government—abandon health care, abandon education, abandon young people in the province—in the interest of the balanced-budget strategy.

That wasn't an acceptable strategy. We were weren't about to abandon the principles by which we were elected and the program which we were elected to implement.

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The second option would have been to run a much deeper deficit and put the economy at some risk, thus detracting business investment in the province, with those who would invest questioning whether or not we would ever see a balanced budget again and whether it would be sustainable.

The third choice at that point in time was to seek a tax increase to support the very public services—health in particular—that we were so committed to.

That's how we had to start. Since then, things have changed. We have moved from deficit budgets to balanced budgets. We've moved now into the second consecutive year where, with the year-end finished and/or projected this year, we will have a surplus position. And we've moved to balanced budgets projected on a go-forward basis into the foreseeable future of the four-year planning cycle that we work towards. From an economic standpoint, the business community can feel very comfortable that we have the finances of the province well in order.

When I first rose I spoke briefly to the roles I've had, including my time on Management Board throughout the mandate. It has given me a unique opportunity as someone who doesn't sit in the front benches to see the workings of government in the context of the corporate enterprise, not individual ministries, and how the discussion and the debate goes on around the priorities in-year for matters that may have had budgetary approval but have not yet had the business case built around them before they can get their full approval or, in some cases, partial approval. Not all money is released for programs until there is a solid business case built around those. So it's given me something of a unique opportunity—at least from my perspective—to see the workings of government from that particular capacity and that facet, and having seen it through more than one Minister of Finance and through more than one budget.

The plan, though, is not just about the business economy. It's not just about the fiscal house of the province in and of itself. It's about much more than that. It's about offering Ontarians the opportunities they need to find the successes that they so much deserve. We have to look for ways to provide those opportunities.

I believe Bill 187 is a piece of legislation that we could all celebrate because it's rooted in the values that I think we all share in this place. We may find different ways to get there on occasion, but I believe the principles are the ones that we all share. It's certainly another example of our government's commitment to investing in the great resource of this province, the people: the 13.5 million, or thereabouts, people of this great province of Ontario.

I'm confident in saying that the track record we have to this point is exemplary. We have addressed the matter



of health care in a substantive way. We have turned that corner. There is much yet to do, but we have turned that corner. We can see, as things like the LHINs roll out, that communities are beginning to embrace the opportunity to engage at a more local level in making decisions about health care themselves and are not depending on Queen's Park, this place, to make all the decisions on their behalf.

Since taking government in the fall of 2003, our schools are better places to learn. There can be no one I know of who would even consider saying that they are not better places for students to learn. Throughout the province, we have more teachers, better facilities, better programs, higher scores, higher rates of graduation, smaller class sizes—the list is virtually never-ending.

The colleges and universities continue to grow and expand in this province. Probably one of the biggest challenges in the sector is the success the Reaching Higher plan had, and that's that it attracted more students into the system, beyond all of our expectations, because they can see the opportunity and values being presented now in our college and universities for them to learn, to prepare themselves for the workplace, to prepare for additional academic opportunity, the chances of succeeding and building a future for themselves in the province, and there are so many more young people and adults that want that opportunity. Through the Reaching Higher plan, we've provided that very window of opportunity for them.

The health care system is better. This health care system is stronger and it's more responsive to the needs of Ontarians than it ever has been.

Infrastructure within Ontario, infrastructure that we so desperately need, is coming. You know, the \$30-billion ReNew Ontario plan provides wonderful opportunities for us on a go-forward basis to have that core infrastructure that's so important for a civil society to continue to be able to support its citizens and also grow and expand.

We're also ushering in with this particular budget a new era of economic strength in the province of Ontario. The minister spoke very clearly about some of the things that are currently in place to help. He spoke about legislating the capital tax elimination so that businesses know exactly where we're going on that front. That's one of the things business has been telling us throughout our mandate that they wanted to see happen. They would like it sooner. They would have liked it today. But they're pleased that it's legislated and that there is an end game in sight and they can plan their business cycle accordingly.

I've heard very good things in the past number of days about the capital cost allowance, where we're mirroring what our federal counterparts are doing. We're mirroring their efforts on the capital cost allowance and it's something that's being very well received in the business community. There's more to be done there yet. They would like to see other things done during the balance of this year in that regard. They would like to see that program extended both federally and provincially. We

look to our federal counterparts to act on that, and the minister, in his consultations with the federal minister, to see if there are strategies whereby that program might be extended to help strengthen the province.

I'm very proud to speak to the achievements that we've made during the course of this three and a half years in government on behalf of the people of Ontario and the progress that's being made in the province. But it's not a matter of sitting back at this point and suggesting that everything is done and that we can somehow rest on the successes to date. We know that there is much to do.

We want to continue, during the balance of this mandate on a go-forward basis, the very real and positive changes that are making this a stronger, a healthier and a more prosperous province for the people of Ontario.

This is what Bill 187 does by investing particularly in our children, in families in Ontario, investment for and on behalf of our seniors and those who are vulnerable within the province of Ontario, so that all Ontarians have a greater opportunity to succeed and an opportunity at success.

The minister in his comments spoke to the initiatives on the area of developmental disabilities. It's something we heard about during our consultations as a standing committee of all parties. It is clearly something that the minister heard about during his extensive consultations as the minister. Our government responded to that particular need, because it was a very high priority for those in Ontario.

Giving everyone a fair chance to succeed is simply the right thing for us to be doing. It's the right thing to do for our society and the right thing to do for the economy, because by offering more opportunities now, we can help build a strong and prosperous Ontario for decades into the future.

We want all Ontarians to be part of a province that prospers and all Ontarians to have an opportunity to enjoy the benefit of having the highest quality of life possible. We would like to be, and we strive to be, as a province, the best place in the world to live: the highest standard of living, the best quality of life we can have, the best health care system possible, the best education system possible.

There aren't too many of us in this Legislature—we all, at one time or another, have an opportunity to travel and see other parts of the world, either modestly so or more substantively, but I don't recall anyone in this Legislature coming back after being outside of Ontario, outside of the country of Canada, abroad from North America, coming back and saying, "You know, I found a place I'd rather live. I found someplace better than the province of Ontario to raise my children. I found someplace other than the province of Ontario that provides more opportunity, that cares for its sick in a better way than we do, that takes care of its seniors, that recognizes those who are vulnerable, that has a democratic system that works as well as ours." I don't recall anyone coming back and saying, "We'd rather find someplace else in the world to live."



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I recall in this Legislature the Premier coming back after visiting abroad and speaking about being the Premier of the best province in the best country in the world and recognizing in those travels how fortunate he is, and through him, how fortunate each of us is here in Ontario. Those are the reasons we're making opportunity for all more accessible and making success more achievable across Ontario.

It's not just about the economy, it's not just about health, it's not just about education and it's not just about seniors. There are other elements of our lives, other elements of our society that need attention and support and, on occasion, need us to pay attention so that society as a whole knows we're looking at it in a comprehensive fashion.

The minister spoke about how the bill fosters economic activity, but I want to tell you about a couple of other things it does. The vibrancy and economic health of Ontario's cultural industries is addressed in the budget. The entertainment and creative clusters help make Ontario an attractive place to live, work, invest and simply enjoy.

To recognize the contribution that artists are making to Ontario's economy and its quality of life, we've introduced new legislation, the Status of Ontario's Artists Act, 2007. This is a foundation piece of legislation. The status of the artist act was not meant to be the be-all and end-all for artists. It wasn't meant to address all the issues they put before us. It was intended to put into legislation a recognition of the artist—the first time that's been done—and to provide a foundation on which to build, because there are other ministries, other acts that would be have to be addressed to meet some of the needs the artists have put before us.

But the legislation is going to help us retain the skills and talents of Ontario artists, and it's going to empower them to continue transforming the cultural industries in the province of Ontario. It's going to help them in transforming the economy as it relates to the arts and society and be innovators in the world.

Bill 187, if enacted, and this piece of legislation within it, will help to give Ontario artists the recognition they so rightfully deserve at the provincial level, as well as the recognition they so rightfully get in their own communities. Each of us in our communities have arts organizations or theatres. In mine, we have the Durham West Arts Council, which is a very active organization that attempts to ensure that cultural activity in the arts is something in the presence of the community, that people recognize it's there. They put venues on, a variety of sorts; they support the arts community. But it gives it a real focus in the west part of Durham region, which is an important part of our community. I know that similar organizations, whether it's arts councils or theatre groups, exist in other parts of the province and get the support of the local communities, and it's important for us to be able to recognize them as well.

From an economic standpoint, Bill 187 will extend the 18% tax rate for the Ontario production service tax credit

until March 2008, so there's an opportunity for further tax credits; it moves us forward at least another year. The matter can be further addressed on a go-forward basis, but it provides some tax incentives yet for various types of productions in Ontario. This tax credit is an important part of supporting the Ontario film and television industry and, for me, of maintaining our competitiveness within this whole sector.

We're not only committed to the arts; we're also committed to seeing our children continue to prosper and progress in our school system through the investment of some \$781 million in school boards in 2007-08. This is a 17% increase since we took office in 2003-04. These investments are making our schools better places for young people to learn, a better environment for them to spend such an important part of each and every day.

I don't think that any of us can get enough improved test scores. I don't know who wants to see lower test scores. I think everyone in this place is pleased when students are more successful.

I don't know too many who want to see larger class sizes in the primary grades. I heard about smaller class sizes before I came to office, and continue to hear about that as we move to smaller and smaller class sizes in the primary grades. I'm not aware of too many of us in this place who want to see fewer students graduating. I think we're all pleased to see higher graduation rates, smaller class sizes and students doing better in the classroom. This additional funding is going to continue that trend. After all, children need to be given every opportunity to be as successful as possible. They need opportunities as early in life as possible, and thus the smaller class sizes in the primary grades are going to help provide that level of stability early on that will create success as they move forward through the system.

We teach a young person how to ride a bicycle. We don't put them on it and push them down the road, hoping that they stay up and watch as they weave and fall and injure themselves. My preference is to take the child with one hand gently on his shoulder and one hand on the bike, and take them down the road a little bit and get their balance, and let them go a few feet on their own. We can try again and be there with them and support them until they can do it well on their own. I think we should be treating them in much the same way in our education: provide the support, provide the guidance, provide the direction until they can manage it on their own.

We have to supply Ontario's youth and our society future leaders with opportunities throughout their entire developmental phase. That's why we're also proposing an additional \$390-million investment in post-secondary education. This is in addition to the \$6.2-billion Reaching Higher plan in our second budget. A \$390-million investment in post-secondary education will go a long way to support the tens of thousands of new students who are now in our post-secondary education system. It will help to provide them with the opportunities to develop the skills necessary not only to work in the province of Ontario but to create and enhance the business oppor-



tunity here in Ontario. Investing in young people and in post-secondary education is not just about making them good for the workforce; it's about developing the necessary skills and incentives that will allow them to become the employers of the future, allow them to create the jobs of the future.

This fund will also help to quell the enrolment pressures that we've seen. We're also proposing to extend the apprenticeship training tax credit to 2012 and add six new trades to this particularly good program. Clearly, it's not just those who are going on to university that we have to be interested in. We need the skilled trades. We need to support, through apprenticeship training programs, those who want to move more quickly into the workforce and who find that the academia stream is not really where they want to focus their early attention. They will gain a lot of expertise in the field that they might not even gain in the classroom.

These extended training tax credits will help in providing more opportunities for young apprentices in at least six new trades. We all know there are many areas in the province where we're facing a dire shortage in the next few years—if it's not there today—in a number of trades, and we need to support the opportunity so that we have those tradespeople readily available.

By helping students succeed today, we can ensure that Ontario is successful in the future. Through Bill 187, the government has committed itself to offering the best and brightest possible future for the province and for the young people who are in it today. In addition to dealing with opportunities for young people, we know that our seniors are always in need of our support. In this particular budget, we're proposing to assist our seniors by enhancing, yet again, the Ontario property and sales tax credit, for the fourth time in four years.

One of the issues that we often hear about from our seniors is in regard to property taxes, particularly the education side. This particular enhancement in the Ontario property and sales tax credit for those who are more marginal and have more limited means as seniors would go a long way to supporting any cost they might have, whether it's direct cost because they happen to be in their own home, or whether it's more indirect cost because they are renting property, but to offset the equivalent to their Ontario education tax credit related to property in particular. This really is directed to a large extent at those seniors who don't have the opportunities that some others might. They don't have the pension structures. They are of more limited economic means.

1630

Overall, the proposed legislation, Bill 187, is about investing in people and expanding opportunities, because that's what we're planning for the province; that's what the plan for the province should be all about. That's why we're raising the minimum wage. When we came to office, we made a commitment to raise the minimum wage to \$8 during the mandate, and that has been accomplished. That's behind us now. So in this budget we're moving forward with increases in the minimum wage, by 75 cents a year, to \$10.25 over the three-year period.

That's why we're investing in affordable housing and, as the minister spoke to, increasing funding for Legal Aid Ontario. We've recognized that there are elements of being vulnerable in our community. There are those who need more of our support than others. Those who are working in the lower end of the wage stream need increases in the minimum wage. We've done some of that, and this budget will extend that process. We know that through housing allowances we'll provide an opportunity for those in more marginal housing to move into a different type of housing climate, or those who find housing difficult in and of itself to be able to acquire and keep housing. And we know that those who need legal services, who are more vulnerable, often can't get them on the open marketplace, and thus the need for additional funding to Legal Aid Ontario.

There's a whole variety of areas where we see and are acknowledging, through this budget, support for those who are more vulnerable. That also includes those who find themselves injured in the workplace. In order to ensure that no one is diverted along their way to success by a single unfortunate accident that occurs, we're enhancing our workplace safety and insurance benefits for more than 150,000 injured workers. Those will increase 2.5% each time, three times over the next 18 months, for a 7.5% increase in the benefits to injured workers. Often, injured workers find themselves in the most difficult situations. Some will be able to return to work. Many, maybe most, will be able to return to work, but there are those who find themselves in a situation where that's not going to be possible. When we can provide assistance to over 150,000 injured workers in Ontario and, through them, their families, it's the right thing for us to be doing.

This budget proposes an additional \$1.8-billion investment in the health sector for 2007-08. It continues and will continue, as governments go forward, to be the biggest cost that the province finds itself with. It's certainly past the 45% mark of our entire revenue stream, and there are those who project that it could move toward 50% as our aging population demands, because of their health, more and more services and more and more costs related to those services.

This funding will be used to shorten wait times in those critical areas that have been identified. It will be used to provide more doctors and nurses. The minister spoke well to the funding allocations and the movement to get those nurses there to the bedside, doing the preparatory work that's necessary before, during and after the time in which we need to see the physicians. These monies will provide improved access to emergency care. At a time when it's most critical for us to have that type of care, we need to ensure we're making those investments.

By working to help keep Ontarians healthy, we're protecting our most important resource, that being the people of Ontario. After all, each of us in this place is on the side of Ontarians. That's what we're here for. Whether it's young students, whether it's those who have moved on to post-secondary education or apprenticeship,



whether it's those in the workplace or those who find themselves not able to be in the workplace, or our seniors, they all need our support.

There are those in our community as well—and some in this place would be more adept at speaking to this than I, but I'll attempt it in part. We need to also support and recognize the francophone community in Ontario. I had the delightful pleasure for the first time to visit with the member from—Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry? I'd have to look to be sure. I'm hesitant to use his name in this place because the Speaker will probably rule me out of order, so I will just take a moment, and if I can—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** Take your time.

**Mr. Arthurs:** I will. That's not a problem. I will take all the time that's allotted to me. Glengarry–Prescott–Russell; that's what it is. I had the opportunity to visit his riding this past Monday as part of the Small Business Agency of Ontario. About 90% of that community, which borders Quebec and is in the very easterly portion of Ontario—it's probably about 60 or 70 kilometres north of the 401, that major corridor—are francophone. It's obviously a primary language. It was interesting; it was the first time I had a chance to visit that community and to really get a good flavour and a sense of the strength of our francophone community within various quadrants and sectors of the province. We don't see that here in the big city as much. Although there are many who are conversant in both official languages, in my experience, we don't have that dominance of activity within a community that you see there.

This particular piece of legislation, Bill 187, will be appointing a French language services commissioner and establishing the office of the French language services commissioner. During the committee hearings on this bill, the francophone community was very excited about this particular provision. They're very pleased to see that we're moving on establishing the services commissioner through the French Language Services Act, through Bill 187. It's an important part to ensure that the services that francophones are entitled to by legislation and under the charter are available and that there are means to ensure that those services get provided. There was great concern being expressed at the committee that without these types of initiatives, there are areas in the province of Ontario where our second-language capacity may be lost, and we can't see that happen. Being in Hawkesbury these past few days drove home for me particularly the need to ensure that we protect that very important asset within the province of Ontario.

The proposal would give regulation-making authority to the minister responsible for francophone affairs to ensure that both the quality and accessibility of French-language services will be improved throughout the province of Ontario, not just in those areas where there is a dominant francophone community but in those areas, quite frankly, where that doesn't exist but where we want to strengthen the capacity for Ontarians to use services in one or both of the official languages.

We are committed. This government is committed to supporting the vitality of that francophone community throughout Ontario and ensuring that francophones, like everyone else in the province of Ontario, get access to the services they need when they need them.

There are a number of elements of this comprehensive piece of legislation, Bill 187. I haven't even touched upon the Ontario child benefit today. I haven't spoken to the Ontario college of childhood educators. There's more yet in this bill than we've been able to address in the time allocated for our purposes.

I'm very pleased. I'm very pleased at what we've accomplished in this legislation. I'm very proud of what we've accomplished during this mandate in respect to supporting vital public services in the province of Ontario, enhancing those public services in areas where it's so critically necessary and, in this particular budget, dealing with areas of vulnerability. As the minister said, it hasn't all been done. It's certainly not finished. It's a recognition in a variety of areas that there are real needs and that we have to build upon those after a long period of time in which that was not the priority, after a decade in which that was not the priority. It's time that we refocused our attention to ensure that we strengthen Ontario for every Ontarian and, as others have said, effectively stand upon each other's shoulders. But we have to have a strong base on which to do that.

We're committed to the prosperity of this great province and the people who are resident and constituent here. We're committed to the health of the people of this province and to ensuring that they have quality health care and a healthy lifestyle. The creation of the Ministry of Health Promotion—I see the minister here this afternoon participating in this—is clearly where we want to move the agenda, away from simply taking care of illness, and creating a province where people are healthy and thus diverting some of those resources to other much-needed areas. So I'm pleased that we accomplished that during this mandate. It wasn't something that I'm aware that we set out to do at the very beginning. I don't recall it being a part of the overall platform, that we would have a Ministry of Health Promotion, but it became evident fairly early on among caucus and cabinet that there was a need to change the channel on health care, and creating a Ministry of Health Promotion was a way to change that channel.

1640

For the province to be at its absolute best, all Ontarians must have the opportunity to be the best-educated, most highly skilled, healthy, productive, and—better still—innovative in the world. Unless we can create an environment where we are the most innovative through our education and training, we won't be able to compete in the generations ahead. We're not about to try to compete on low wages. That's why we've moved on the minimum wage. It's critically important that we become highly innovative in what we do and the means by which we create business in the province of Ontario.

The job's not going to be finished until each of the challenges that have been set out have been met and



every opportunity that we can see has been seized by the people of the province of Ontario and every Ontarian gets their fair shot at success—opportunity for each.

Bill 187, our proposed legislation, to some extent, but not solely, will level the playing field to provide opportunity for progress, not just for those of us who might be a little bit more privileged. For those of us who work in this environment, a somewhat rarefied environment at times, we live in a different world than a lot of Ontarians. We have to ensure, in what we do, that we continue to remember that we do live in a different place than others and that we provide opportunity not just for the privileged few but for all Ontarians.

I always remain optimistic that as we move through the legislative process, as the debate continues on something as important as this budget bill, with all of its elements, members of this House will give very serious consideration to their support. I hope, at the end of the day, when the vote is called, that the vote on this bill could be unanimous.

I want to thank this Legislature for the time this afternoon and I want to thank the minister for his insight, the work of his ministry in particular, the staff, the bureaucrats who worked so hard on this, for the work that they've all done.

Our time is not quite up, but I'm sure there are other members who might like to join in this debate during the course of the time we have left between now and 6 o'clock. I remain optimistic that we'll continue in this place for this debate over the next hour and a quarter, and that it won't be interrupted by us having to take half an hour out as bells ring. I'd much rather spend the time in debate hearing from the opposition parties about their interest in the bill, about their interest in the budget, about how they would like to see education improved, about what they see as priorities in their communities in respect to health care, about how they feel about those who are vulnerable in our communities, about how they feel about the need for public housing and supportive housing in the community, about how they see innovation and growth and prosperity in the province. I'm hoping they'll take the time, the hour and a quarter that's left for this afternoon, to engage in this debate and have the opportunity to put their comments on the record. It seems counterproductive to have the bells ring for half an hour and not have the opportunity to hear from the opposition in respect to their concerns and their interests and their priorities and their view of the budget. There hasn't been, it doesn't appear, a lot of interest, as the minister said, during question period about the budget. If one can assume from that that there's a high degree of satisfaction, certainly we'll be happy to see, at the end of the day, the budget supported in a unanimous fashion.

In the absence of that, there is an opportunity now for the opposition to put themselves on the record in respect to Bill 187 and the 2007 McGuinty Liberal budget.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate? The member from Durham.

**Mr. O'Toole:** First of all, let me just put in perspective, in the very brief time I have—

**The Acting Speaker:** Excuse me again. I have erred. I understood that this was in rotation, but it is not. There are questions and comments first. Sorry. Questions and comments, then, the member from Durham.

**Mr. O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

First, let's get the information straight that we're presented with. We're presented here with an omnibus bill. This has 41 schedules and 275 pages. In it, there are a number of parts that I agree with, to be clear, on innovation, the Ontario institute of technology. I would be supportive of a number of measures. But for the most part, what I'm most upset with is where they say one thing and where they're actually doing something else. That's kind of reminiscent of their election process. It sort of circumvents the issue.

They took great pride in saying that it's a child-friendly budget. In the brief time I have, let's look at the child benefit payment. That clawback provision was part of their election platform. The NDP were at least consistent on it. That clawback was to low-income families under our government. What you've done here is you've quite seriously circumvented the real debate. You aren't giving them back the money. The first year, each family would get \$250. The value of that is \$1,100. They won't get that full amount until 2011. If I dare say, it's a bit deceptive.

If you want to know the real outcome, they're spending \$22 billion more. Have you got a doctor? Can you get services for seniors? You're paying more and getting less. That is, quite frankly, the overarching message.

What are the independent stakeholders in the economy saying? I'm reading, briefly, a headline from the National Post in early April. This is a report from the CAW. It says that in five years, 105,000 GTA manufacturing jobs have left. This economy is in serious—and they're limping to the finish line, the election on October 10. I have very little faith that this budget is anything more than an election-style budget. With that, there will be more to be said later on this particular aberration.

**Mr. Marchese:** This is a Liberal don't-believe-it budget. It is a litany of empty gestures and pre-election promises from a chronic promise-breaker Liberal government. That's what this budget is.

The Minister of Finance and the member from Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge were talking about what they're doing to help those most vulnerable citizens of Ontario. The Minister of Finance stood up and said, "Mike Harris was so bad. They cut 21% of welfare rates to those most needy individuals in society." You get the impression, when he attacks the Tories, that he is going to fix it. And what do the Liberals do? The first year, a 3% increase; the second, zero—that's how generous they were in the second year: zero; 2% the third and 2% the fourth year. That's how generous they have been. That's how they've fixed the welfare system for those most needy individuals.



Look at the national child supplement program that was clawed back by Harris, and McGuinty was going to fix that when he got elected. That's what he promised. Three and a half years later, he does nothing of the kind. Two hundred twenty million stolen by the Liberal government—they've not fixed the problem that the Tories had caused. Then they say, just before the election, "We're going to fix it," with the rolling out of a five-year period to end the national child supplement program. That's what these Liberals do.

Look at the \$10 minimum wage. Under intense pressure from New Democrats and the Toronto Star, they relent and say, "Oh yes, we're going to do the \$10 minimum wage and it's now going to be \$10.25," in three years' time. That's how they deal with our most needy citizens of Ontario.

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I always find it amusing to listen to the Conservative caucus. They talk about wanting to invest in health care, but Mr. Tory, the leader of the Conservative Party, is clearly on record as indicating he wants to cut \$2.6 billion from the health care budget. The constituents in my riding of Ottawa West—Nepean want to know—

**Mr. O'Toole:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker:** Stop the clock, please.

**Mr. O'Toole:** The Speaker recently has indicated in his remarks that comments that are not correct or in fact are false—and he's a minister. He should not be attributing statements to Mr. Tory that were not accurate.

1650

**The Acting Speaker:** The statement has been made but, with respect, it is not a point of order. Please continue.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** No. I stopped the clock as fast as I could. You have one minute and 39 seconds. Please continue.

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** The fact of the matter is that John Tory does want to cut \$2.6 billion from health care, so my constituent in Ottawa West—Nepean have a series of questions. They want to know what the Tory party is going to cut. Are they going to cut the three new operating rooms at the Queensway Carleton Hospital? Are they going to cut the expansion of the Queensway Carleton Hospital, phase 3? Are they going to cut—

**The Acting Speaker:** I remind the member that you're commenting on the previous speaker, and I don't believe that any of that was discussed. So please continue.

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** These are all items that are included in the budget: a 21.5% increase to Queensway Carleton Hospital budget; the cancer centre treatment at the QCH; health centre status for the Nepean Community Resource Centre; three new free vaccines for children; the CHEO cardiac unit, which the Conservative Party wanted to shut down and move to Toronto; 15 new operating rooms at the Ottawa Hospital; increased resources to the community health centre budgets; new funding for long-term-care homes; funding for Roger's House at

CHEO; and prenatal screening for 28 different illnesses at CHEO.

There was an additional \$1.8 million invested in health in 2007-08. These are the kinds of investments that have come to the community that I represent. The people of Ottawa West—Nepean want to know how John Tory is going to cut \$2.6 billion out of health care and at the same time improve health care with an aging population. It makes no sense whatsoever.

I'm proud to be part of a government, under the leadership of Premier McGuinty, that is investing in health care in the Ottawa region.

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington):** To follow my colleague from Durham and also the member from Trinity—Spadina, I too have concerns about this bill. There are many parts of the bill that are applicable to what Ontarians need and want, but there are too many parts of this bill that really miss the mark.

The previous speaker talks about all the investments that are being made in hospitals in his riding. I would love to stand up here and boast about investments made at Joseph Brant hospital. There aren't any. This government closed 60 beds in the last three years at Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital. But in not having \$40 million to give to Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital, there is enough money in this budget to give \$50 million to Magna Corp. I found that astounding and an insult to folks waiting for appropriate health care in my community.

The Stronach centre has been given \$50 million. There is no open application process, and that is consistent with the kinds of issues we've been talking about in this House for two weeks: no open process for applications by agencies that help immigrants. I think the financial help that Magna is getting is not something that was transparent. It was not announced in this budget and yet it is being attached to this budget.

I think we need transparency and accountability, and we need Ontarians to benefit from the money this government has had in surplus.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge has two minutes.

**Mr. Arthurs:** I want to acknowledge and thank the members from the ridings of Durham, Trinity—Spadina, the Minister of Health Promotion and the member from Burlington for their comments. I'm going to encapsulate some of the things we're doing in the little bit of time that's left.

Over the mandate, we've increased the ODSP and OW rates three times. We are increasing WSIB rates 2.5%, three times each, over an 18-month period. We've introduced in this budget the Ontario child benefit. That's going to benefit 1.3 million children during the rollout period to the tune of \$2.1 billion. That's far more than we were able to support under other programs. We're providing a \$100-a-month housing allowance to tens of thousands so they have better housing accommodation. For seniors, we've increased for the fourth time the Ontario property and sales tax credit. These are the types



of measures. Each of them by themselves may not seem to be dramatic but, in combination, these are the types of measures that go to the heart of supporting those in Ontario who need our direct support.

In the 30 seconds or so that are left, I want to take a look at what others are saying outside of this place. Anna Sado, the president of George Brown College: "We salute the Ontario government for actually making the funds available for the purposes for which they were intended."

Tyler Charlebois, the director of advocacy for the College Student Alliance: "After 15 years of underfunding and seeing classrooms and buildings crumbling at their feet, the McGuinty government is investing additional funds to renew our learning institutions for the future."

There are more comments.

Thank you for your time.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln):** I'm going to split my time with the member for Durham. It's a pleasure to have a chance to comment here, despite the guillotine motion of the McGuinty government.

**Mr. O'Toole:** What are they afraid of?

**Mr. Hudak:** I'm not sure. My colleague asked what they're afraid of. I guess they're afraid of real debate on the incredible increase in spending under the Dalton McGuinty government, with no results for taxpayers. We're seeing a significant increase in portables in the province of Ontario and longer waiting lists for health procedures. We've seen some 125,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs fly away from the province of Ontario under Dalton McGuinty's regime. We had always been the engine of growth for all of Canada, a place where people would come from St. John's, Newfoundland, or Victoria, B.C., to the province of Ontario to find work, to raise a family and to work hard, put money aside and provide a better future for their children or grandchildren. The place where people like my grandparents came, from then-Czechoslovakia, leaving eastern Europe at a time of great instability. They came to the province of Ontario because they knew that if they worked hard and played by the rules, they'd have a much better life for themselves, for their children and for their grandchildren.

But sadly, under Dalton McGuinty, it's no longer the case. Ontario, believe it or not, was dead last in economic growth under the McGuinty government in 2006, projected by other banks for 2007 similarly to be at the back of the pack. This is not the Ontario that we all grew up in and not the Ontario that we know. Incredibly, a net loss of some 30,000 talented Ontarians to other provinces. It's not the way it has always been. It has always been that Ontario was a net gainer of Canadians from other provinces or territories. We all know about the boom in Alberta. God bless Alberta. They're doing well and I'm happy for them. But some eight other provinces and territories now have more Ontarians going there than they're sending to the province of Ontario. That's the kind of Ontario that Dalton McGuinty has built for us.

His high taxes, his runaway spending, his bizarre energy policy to reduce our hydro supply, which has been always been a strength for the province of Ontario, have caused a massive loss of well-paying jobs in the manufacturing sector. My colleague from Burlington and I have both, sadly, seen the loss of some major employers in the steel industry in Hamilton, Dahl manufacturing in Burlington, job losses at GM in St. Catharines and Bazaar & Novelty in St. Catharines to name just some. Niagara, Hamilton and Burlington have always had a strong manufacturing sector, but no longer under Dalton McGuinty.

What do we see instead? A sneaky tax increase on the mining company, one of the projects to cheer about in the far north. Benefit agreements negotiations with local First Nations to bring jobs and investment and prosperity to some places that haven't seen that kind of investment ever. A billion-dollar investment by De Beers that would spin off in north-eastern Ontario down to Timmins. Already, hundreds of millions of dollars invested in that project. Premier McGuinty himself was on the soil when they broke the ground for the Victor mine and had boasted about the remote mining tax—begun, by the way, under the Progressive Conservative government to attract mines like this. Dalton McGuinty, when they were there for the photo op, talked about the tax discount for remote mines. But what does he do when he's back here behind closed doors in the provincial capital, in Toronto? Without consultation, without any kind of notice, without any kind of signal, he jacks up the tax rate on this particular project to some 13% potentially, eliminating the remote mine holiday.

Think of the repercussions, not only in the province, in the mineral exploration sector, not only the betrayal by Dalton McGuinty of the First Nations in the area, the communities of Timmins and the surrounding area, but also the signal that it sends to the international community: "Watch out for investing in Ontario. We might just jack up your taxes, despite boasting we have the lowest tax rates."

I can't believe that the government is ramming this through in a guillotine motion. The finance critic, the talented member for Beaches–East York was there at the committee with me, Mr. Speaker. You may recall that. We were at the point where we couldn't even debate the amendments on the floor because of the guillotine motion that caused votes to transpire without members having a chance to state their opinions or ask questions of the parliamentary assistant or staff.

We see today ongoing stonewalling by the Dalton McGuinty government when it comes to the slush fund, where it has become obvious that it's not what you do, it's who you knew in the Ontario Liberal Party that got you that grant. Hard-working groups like the Slovenian community at Bled Hall in Beamsville; the Italian Canadian clubs in Port Colborne, Fort Erie and Niagara Falls; the Fort Erie Multicultural Centre, which helps refugees coming to Canada in desperate conditions, tries to help them out with their cases and help them settle when successful; Casa El Norte, another example—they



did not get dime one from the Dalton McGuinty government. Do you know why? They didn't even know that this funding existed. Only Liberal insiders seemed to have known about it, and, boy oh boy, like pigs to the trough, they benefited from this fund. There are many examples of direct connections with the Liberal Party, staffers in ministers' offices and grants going to groups with no questions asked, no accountability, no reporting mechanisms and no public knowledge of the account. As my colleague from Durham says, there's no accountability. These guys are spending money at a rate unseen before in the province of Ontario, a \$22.4-billion increase in total spending. As my colleague from Durham says, correctly, a band of pirates on shore leave would have shown more restraint than the Dalton McGuinty government and, quite frankly, caused less damage to the economy in the province of Ontario.

Given the continued stonewalling of the McGuinty government when asked to ask the auditor to come in and look at the \$32-million slush fund to benefit the Ontario Liberal Party, I have no recourse other than to move adjournment of debate.

**The Acting Speaker:** Shall the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. There will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1703 to 1733.*

**The Acting Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise and be counted by the Clerk. Please be seated.

All those opposed will please rise.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 9; the nays are 30.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

The member from Erie—Lincoln has the floor.

**Mr. Hudak:** I'm certainly very disappointed in the whipped votes by the government members. I know colleagues opposite are very concerned about the slush fund. I know that they didn't want to be heading into an election campaign in five months' time for the writ with this hanging over their heads. I suspect many members of the government behind closed doors want to see this investigated and grants go to proper agencies in ridings, rather than strictly those with Liberal connections.

We will stay on this course. We want to get to the bottom of the Son of Gomery affair. We want to find out exactly who the Chuck Guité is for the Ontario Liberal Party. Is it the minister himself? Is it the Minister of

Finance, as the chair of the Liberal election team? Is it Don Guy, the former chief of staff, now running the Ontario Liberal campaign? Until we get to the bottom of this, there is no use continuing with debate on Bill 187. I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr. Hudak has moved adjournment of the House. Shall the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. There will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1736 to 1806.*

**The Acting Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise to be recorded.

Please be seated.

All those opposed will please stand.

**The Clerk of the Assembly:** The ayes are 5; the nays are 31.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Order, please. Pursuant to the order of the House dated April 11, 2007, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Sorbara has moved third reading of Bill 187, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. There will be a 10-minute bell, but I believe it's going to—yes, I can see the deferral slip coming. I have a deferral slip dated May 9, 2007, that reads as follows:

"Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the motion by Minister Sorbara for third reading of Bill 187, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and others matters, be deferred until the time of deferred votes on May 10, 2007."

It's signed by Dave Levac, chief government whip.

Having received that, and the hour now being well after 6 of the clock, this House stands in recess until 6:45 this evening.

*The House adjourned at 1808.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*



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## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 9 May 2007

Mercredi 9 mai 2007

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Greffière  
Deborah Deller





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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 9 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 9 mai 2007

*The House met at 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 174, An Act to enact the Taxation Act, 2006 and make complementary and other amendments to other Acts, when Bill 174 is next called as a government order the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs; and

That the standing committee on finance and economic affairs shall be authorized to meet, in addition to its regularly scheduled meeting times, on Tuesday, May 15, 2007 after routine proceedings for the purpose of conducting public hearings on the bill; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the clerk of the committee shall be 12 p.m. on Wednesday, May 16, 2007. No later than 5 p.m. on May 17, 2007 those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill, and any amendments thereto. The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond the normal hour of adjournment until completion of clause-by-clause consideration. Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 127(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House not later than May 28, 2007. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

That, upon receiving the report of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called on that same day; and

That on the day the order for third reading of the bill is called, the time available for debate shall be one hour, and the time shall be apportioned equally among the recognized parties; and

That when the time allotted for debate has expired, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That there shall be no deferral of any vote allowed pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 10 minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Watson has moved government notice of motion number 362. Mr. Watson.

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** I'm pleased to speak in support of Bill 174, a great piece of legislation put forward by our government. I know it will have the support of all members of the House, because this bill does a couple of things that the constituents in the business community have been asking for for some time.

If passed, the Strengthening Business through a Simpler Tax System Act, 2006, will accomplish three important goals—and the title of the bill says it all, as my friend the Minister of Revenue knows all too well.

First, it will deliver clear benefits to businesses of all sizes. They'll spend less time on paperwork and save up to \$100 million annually from one set of tax forms, one audit and one set of rules. That's going to simplify things for businesses in my riding in Ottawa West-Nepean. They've been asking for this kind of simplification for some time.

Second, there's going to be a modest reduction in the amount corporations in Ontario will have to pay, of some \$90 million a year. That is money that businesses are going to be able to save, that they're not spending on paperwork and duplication of efforts.

Third, it's going to reduce red tape by cutting the combined personal and corporate tax legislation and regulations currently in existence by more than half.

The other party talked about cutting red tape. We're doing something about it; we're doing something in a concrete fashion with Bill 174.

1850

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** You're not going to bring back the Red Tape Commission, are you?

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** No we're not going to bring back the Red Tape Commission. What we are doing is rolling



out the red carpet for businesses, and we're doing that through the creation of the Ministry of Small Business and Entrepreneurship. My friend Mr. Lalonde, who is from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, is working with the small business agency, a great initiative of Premier McGuinty's, made up of parliamentary assistants from various ministries. They've been out holding hearings. I know Mr. Lalonde was in Hawkesbury, I believe, and Cornwall, talking to people in the small business community. They've said that they support this piece of legislation. They support it for the very reason that it's going to save them time, money and effort. I thank Jean-Marc Lalonde, the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, un grand défenseur des petites et moyennes entreprises dans la province de l'Ontario. Il comprend bien les grands défis des petites entreprises dans les municipalités comme Alexandria, Clarence-Rockland, Hawkesbury et toutes les municipalités de l'est de l'Ontario, et il appuie ce projet de loi et les buts de ce projet de loi.

We know that businesses are going to see clear benefits. The people in Sudbury have been telling their very effective MPP, Mr. Bartolucci. They want to spend less time doing paperwork, less time on the kinds of things that frustrate the business community. That's why people like our colleague from Markham, the Minister of Revenue, our colleague from Mississauga Centre, the Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship, and the Minister of Finance are working in collaboration to ensure that whatever initiatives we take, we have in mind the priorities of the small business community. The businesses are going to spend less time on paperwork. They're going to see that these savings can be invested in creating jobs and fostering a strong, prosperous economy.

We know about job creation on this side of the House. Over 320,000 net new jobs have been created since Premier McGuinty took office in October, 2003. I know in northern Ontario, my friend the Minister of Northern Development and Mines proudly boasts about the net new jobs that have been created—

**Interjection:** 18,000.

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** Over 18,000 net new jobs in northern Ontario, and that's due to the policies of our friend from Sudbury.

This is an agreement. It's an important step in our plan to build a more competitive economy that reduces costs and simplifies the rules for businesses. These benefits far outweigh any costs. There are still some steps that have to be taken before we can conclude a tax collection agreement with the federal government, but we look forward to working with the federal government in a spirit of co-operation, as has been done by my colleague the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, for instance, in the work that he has done to bring forward an immigration agreement with the federal government. We were the only province that did not have the immigration agreement and the labour mobility agreement, and it was the McGuinty government that delivered those historic documents. The unfairness that an immigrant arriving at Pearson Airport would receive simply \$800, where an immi-

grant going to the Trudeau airport in Dorval, Quebec would receive \$3,800: These are the kinds of arrangements we have made that make good sense. Bill 174 follows along the same strategy.

We know that at the end of process, some people who now work for us will be working for the federal government. This is a transition period, and we respect the individuals who are working in the Ontario public service. We know that change is never easy, but we will continue to work with those affected and with their bargaining units to help ensure the process is both fair and transparent.

This is a piece of legislation that one would assume the opposition, both parties, would want to support. It's a reasonable piece of legislation. We hope they're not going to engage in some of the puerile tactics of bell-ringing and stalling time. They're always on the one hand complaining that they want more debating time, but whose party is standing up, day in and day out, ringing the bells, wasting the time of this Legislature?

I would suggest that the honourable members across the way would do their constituents a better service if they actually engaged in the debate on this particular piece of legislation. We all know businesses in our own communities, whether they're in Willowdale, Orléans, Kitchener, the good people in my friend Mario Sergio's riding, or Brampton. They work hard, they put in long hours. The small business community is the backbone of any progressive economy, and these individuals work hard. They don't have a lot of free time to spend with family and friends. We have to give them those tools that are going to minimize their effort at filling out endless streams of paperwork for the federal government and the provincial government. So harmonizing this particular activity for the business community through the Strengthening Business through a Simpler Tax System Act is something that I'm very proud to speak out in favour of and to support.

To all of those businesses in my own community in Ottawa West–Nepean, whether they're at some of the shopping malls—Bayshore, Carlingwood or Pinecrest—or some of the small businesses along Carling or Woodroffe Avenues, these people work hard, they pay their share of taxes, but when it comes time to fill out the paperwork, why not simplify the process and create, in essence, one-stop shopping? I was pleased, when I was the former Minister of Consumer and Business Services, to create the ServiceOntario concept, which is one-stop shopping.

We have a wonderful system in Ottawa, where the federal government, the municipal government and the provincial government are housed in one storefront operation at Ottawa city hall. It's a great initiative that I signed with the former federal minister and my colleague the member from Kitchener Centre. We signed the agreement in Brockville a couple of years ago, and that allowed us to work with the federal government, with the local municipal governments, because people are busy in the 21st century. They don't have time to go and take a



civics lesson and figure out which level of government is responsible for what.

So we've consolidated in centres across Ontario under the banner of ServiceOntario, and at the federal level under Service Canada, and we now allow people in Ottawa city hall, for instance, to come in, pay perhaps their property tax, if they have a parking fine, if they need information on job searching skills, if they need a birth certificate—

**Mr. Leal:** Register their kids.

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** Register their kids for recreation programs—my colleague from Peterborough, who served the city council in Peterborough so admirably for 18 years, I believe.

So this is the change that this government has brought to this particular approach. We work in collaboration with other levels of government.

I had the honour of being a mayor and city councillor for nine years in my community, and it was like World War III when we were constantly fighting with the provincial government that was downloading services and costs to the local taxpayers. There was no advance warning, there was no heads-up, there was no consultation back then.

**Mr. Leal:** Mike Harris just sent you a fax.

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** We got a fax from Mike Harris or Ernie Eves after the fact, and it was not the kind of co-operation that I think most of us have come to expect.

Those of us who served in municipal government very much appreciate the work that Minister Gerretsen, Brad Duguid and others have done with respect to the AMO agreement, where we have a formalized memorandum of understanding, where we actually consult the municipal sector before we do anything that's going to affect them.

In conclusion, I'm very pleased to support Bill 174. I hosted a breakfast just on Friday with the chamber of commerce at Scotiabank Place. Some of you may know what Scotiabank Place is. It's the home of the Ottawa Senators. I had the pleasure of hosting my monthly breakfast series with the chamber of commerce and our friend Gail Logan, the president of the chamber. My guest speaker at that particular breakfast was Eugene Melnick, who was the owner of the Senators. We were able to sign a \$2-million agreement that we're providing to host the World Junior Hockey Championship in Ottawa in 2009. It's going to be great for the community.

When I talked to business people—there were over 250 business people at that breakfast—those individuals were saying time and time again, "Whatever you can do as a legislator, as an MPP and as a minister to simplify the tax reporting system in the province and the country, please do it." For those people who I had the chance to speak with on Friday at Scotiabank Place, I say I proudly support Bill 174.

I thank the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Revenue, the Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship and Premier McGuinty for making sure that this got on to the agenda of the federal government, and at the end of the day this is going to make life a lot

simpler for the small businessmen and -women of our community.

**1900**

I thank my friend the member from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, who was the chair of the small business working group and has done some great work. One of the hallmarks of this government that I'm very proud of is that we are engaged in dialogue. It's not just monologue; it's dialogue. It's going out and listening to the small business individuals—small business people—and I thank M. Lalonde very much for the work that he and the other parliamentary assistants are doing. Mr. Leal has been instrumental in that committee as well. It shows that all members of this government are taking an active role in ensuring that the small business community's voice is heard, but more importantly that we act on those things that they tell us they need help on.

Bill 174 is a good piece of legislation, and I look forward to hearing the supportive comments of my friends on the opposite side of the House.

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: We have visitors in the gallery today. They are from the French fries capital of the world. Both of them are councillors of a municipality in my riding, Alfred et Plantagenet, and they're also directors of the Hydro commission. One of them is Benoit Lamarche, the director of Embrun Hydro, and the other is René Beaulne, Hydro 2000, Alfred et Plantagenet. Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Further debate?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale-High Park):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I just wanted to introduce—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. DiNovo:** I'm sitting next to Rosario. This shows true love—my husband, Gil Gaspar.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I'm sure the government side doesn't mind that time being on their clock.

Further debate? The member for Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** On Bill 174, once again, the Minister of Health Promotion introduced this time allocation motion, which is a travesty of democracy, to put it mildly.

This is a case where—today we had another bill; I think it was 178. Now we have Bill 174. These are budget bills. They're actually related to important decisions by the government and by cabinet where they've shut down debate. They've invoked notice of closure of debate, and it limits the opposition's opportunity to comment.

I want to put on the record that I would like to consider sharing my time with other members present. I think—I'm putting the member on notice—the member from Burlington may be interested, because as a former elected chair of Halton region, I think it's important that we get that sorted out early on.

It's good that the Speaker is paying attention temporarily.

But here we have a huge bill. The member from Willowdale, Mr. Zimmer—certainly Peter Kormos is



well-dressed when compared to David tonight, but actually, Peter is always here and always underdressed.

There are two schedules here that I think, if you look at the bill and its structure, are frightening. But at the same time, I would say in summation, this large bill that's actually 239 pages—I know that members have laboured over this bill and they've considered; it's an act to make complementary and other amendments to several important finance acts.

I see the new minister is here. Welcome; I haven't heard your maiden speech yet, let alone your speech on this bill.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** I missed it, and I'll get a copy of Hansard or the transcript. I respect—it's important to go immediately right into cabinet. It's kind of a double victory, which is good; it means you must be really strong, and that is something I respect because you worked hard to get elected. You won fairly—pretty well. I would say that to be a minister immediately is phenomenal. That's absolutely amazing. I know there are other members of your caucus that aren't too pleased, perhaps David Zimmer and others, but I won't get into debate on that.

Bill 174 basically is a bill that we would support. I would say the reason is because it's looking at the importance of being competitive as an economy. There was a lot of work done, and there were some shades of criticism from the Minister of Health Promotion, who wasn't here then, because he's new here, and I understand that he's new to the ministry as well. But he knows that we did a lot of good work in the Red Tape Commission. If he disagrees with that comment, he would know that ultimately this bill is doing a similar thing: It's harmonizing and simplifying the important work of stakeholders like the CFIB. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has advocated for this for years, especially the new minister. They represent a lot of new and emerging businesses, and they want to simplify the tax process. Tax harmonization is the reason we support this particular bill.

Is it perfect? Well, we have areas that we have consideration of, and we'll get to that, but, quite frankly, what's important to—I'm speaking directly to the viewers in the province of Ontario and my riding of Durham. I'm speaking directly to the small businesses, the downtown business improvement area, Ron Hooper, Garth Gilpin, Port Perry, Uxbridge, the new part of my riding, which Wayne Arthurs—and I would say that I spent a good part of this morning with McDonald's. It was McHappy Day at McDonald's today. I did that, and a lot of members do, because they support children in my area. It's Ginger Jackson and her family. I think they run two or three different McDonald's. Part of the proceeds from the meals will be donated to the Jennifer Ashleigh Children's Charity and Precious Minds, which is a children's resource centre.

I think of small business as the very engine of the economy, while at the same time—

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** The backbone.

**Mr. O'Toole:** Yes, the backbone, as the minister for lotteries is commenting.

Quite frankly, my sense is that—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** I couldn't think of the full name—the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

I don't like to get moved off topic because it's—

**Interjection:** Stay focused.

**Mr. O'Toole:** Yes, stay focused.

I think the key here is that because it's a time allocation motion, if you look at the order paper—and for the viewers watching tonight, Minister Watson read this whole page here. They are trying to strangle the opposition's opportunity, and if you talk about—what was the main topic in question period for the last 250 questions? Demanding an audit of the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. And today, the Premier, without the conviction of leadership, admitted softly, tacitly, that they did the wrong thing—*mea culpa*—but he didn't have the courage to actually call in the auditor.

What is its relationship to this act? This is all about the audit procedures as well as the harmonization procedures with the federal government in the corporate tax area.

I've been kind of instructed here, but I'm very passionate on this topic. The only thing is, I'm so frustrated because of the time allocation thing. There are five here, so I'm going to move adjournment of the debate.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr. O'Toole has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour say "aye."

All those opposed say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1909 to 1939.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour, please stand and be counted by the Clerk.

All those opposed, please stand and be counted by the Clerk.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** The ayes are 8; the nays are 31.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I've chatted with members on the other side and there may be unanimous consent, following in the great footsteps of my friend from Sudbury, to allow members to wear the Ottawa Senators pin as the last Canadian team.

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie—Lincoln):** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker: I will grant my personal consent as long as members who have Buffalo Sabres pins are similarly allowed to wear theirs this evening.

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker: While I appreciate the comment from my friend across the way, this is a provincial Legislature; it's not a national one. Therefore, we do not

enter into international arrangements. We have to think only of Canadian teams.

**The Deputy Speaker:** If I have this correctly, I have dual unanimous consent: one for the Ottawa Senators, one for the Buffalo Sabres. Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. O'Toole.

**Mr. O'Toole:** Since we're celebrating sports and their importance to our lifestyle and wellness—he's the minister of health and wellness—we also recognized Glenn Howard, the world cup champion from Garfield Dunlop's riding today. It's important to respect the Canadian teams, the Ottawa Senators of course being the last Canadian team left. But the Sudbury Wolves: The member from Sudbury has stood relentlessly at his table, sometimes unnecessarily, to seek unanimous consent to wear the Sudbury Wolves pin. I'm glad that they're going on to greater heights, unlike the minister.

If you want to talk in serious terms, I was there the night the mining association was there with DeBeers—

**Interjection:** De Beers.

**Mr. O'Toole:** De Beers, rather, was there. It was rather boring, actually. But I think when—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. O'Toole:** Speaker, I've got to slow down a bit here, because a lot of members are just getting in their places or leaving because I'm speaking. You've got to focus on this. The point that I'm trying to make is, this is actually what we're debating tonight: yet another Liberal time allocation of an important bill.

The time allocation here is about a budget bill. We've had the second bill on the budget today, and our member from Erie-Lincoln, Tim Hudak, the critic, has been relentless about how they just don't get it. They've increased spending and they've reduced service. They've eliminated chiropractic, they've eliminated ophthalmology, physiotherapy, yet they've raised taxes on health care by \$2.6 billion.

Our leader, John Tory, told us this: "Don't take a thing from them because"—you can trust what our leader, John Tory, says. What is at question here, what this whole debate about the bells is about, for those listening, is accountability. At the end of the day, a time allocation motion—in fact, the most ironic time allocation motion in the last short period. Bill 155, for the viewer, is on the referendum that's going to be held this October. They kind of screwed it up, so they had to time-allocate a bill on democratic renewal. That's a contradiction. Democratic renewal is about inclusiveness, about debate. They time-allocated that bill, as the member for Trinity-Spadina would know well.

Here we are again. Bill 174, as I said, is an omnibus bill, for those viewing.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** Omnibus bill. It's ominous. It's an ominous bill. Listen to the words.

This ominous bill, which is omnibus in nature, is, quite frankly, 240 pages long. It has schedules in here.

Here's the point. Our critic on this file has instructed us in much detail. In fact, we would say that we finally realized that there's some hope that the newly elected Minister of Revenue—I think that's his title. I missed his maiden speech, which was his introduction of this bill. We actually quite agree with some of the complements of this bill.

Schedule B amends the Corporations Information Act, the Corporations Tax Act, the Electricity Act, the Income Tax Act and the Taxpayer Protection Act.

They do achieve one principal objective here: They streamline the revenue collection part of government business, I think, to the federal level. I was surprised that they didn't harmonize the PST and GST. I was surprised they didn't go the whole route, because small business says that the administrivia of the PST and the GST is problematic for small business, for the small pizzeria, for the small restaurant, for the small business operator. The CFIB have been trying to argue this for years.

They didn't go quite far enough. They got it partially right, but they didn't go all the way.

I think it's important to put on the record that when we were attending, as I tried to state, De Beers's opening of a billion-dollar mining operation in northern Ontario, the president of De Beers Canada was standing beside the minister, and I'm sure the minister was shocked—after, there was a bit of a reception going on, which is always pleasant. The fellow said that it was sort of like a Third World government. I don't think he meant that—because the minister, I know, would have done the right thing.

Greg Sorbara is cash-hungry. They want to tax you more and reduce your levels of service. That's what's worrying people. They're paying more and getting less. Are you waiting longer? Yes, you are. Do you have a doctor? Yes, you don't. That's kind of a contradiction.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** Well, there you go. But the people of Ontario get it.

They're not to be trusted. It's in that vein that I'm going to have to move adjournment of the House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1948 to 2018.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour, please stand to be counted by the Clerk.

All those opposed, please stand to be counted by the Clerk.

**The Deputy Clerk:** The ayes are 7; the nays are 33.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion lost. Member for Durham.

**Mr. O'Toole:** With the very limited time I have left, 36 minutes, I'm not sure I can cover a bill that's this comprehensive, but there are a couple of points that need to be made.



For the viewer tonight, we're debating Bill 174—but we're not actually debating that bill. What the government has done—another budget bill. I don't know what they're trying to slip through here, but quite frankly, the motion we're debating is actually a time allocation motion, a rather long motion, I might say, that exempts members from any particular time with respect to debating an important bill.

That being said, we had an earlier bill today which was the budget bill itself, again time-allocated—and that's becoming the order of the day, time allocation, but substantively for the viewer—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** I think the viewer should know this. Why have the opposition, both the Conservative and the NDP caucuses, been trying in unison to gain the Premier's focus on an important issue? What the substance is behind the debate on the time allocation motion, behind the debate on Bill 174—there's a more important attribute that we should be considering, and that's the debate that we've been having. Over 250 questions have been asked, through the Speaker, of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and indeed the Premier, and we have yet to receive an answer or an apology for comments made by the Premier attributing racial remarks to the opposition, both the NDP and the Conservative caucuses.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. Will the members please keep it down a little? I'm having trouble listening. The member for Durham.

**Mr. O'Toole:** Thank you very much for that respectful interruption, Mr. Speaker. I would say that if a person is just paying attention at a very modest level—there's the article in the Toronto Star today—if the viewers would realize that what we're trying to get the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration on the Liberal slush fund, the \$32 million that has been flushed out at the last minute, and to me—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Hudak:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Despite the loud voice of the Minister of Health Promotion, I wonder if there is a quorum in the House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is there a quorum?

**The Acting Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Granum):** A quorum is present, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** A quorum is present. Now, let's just keep it down. I don't want to disturb the mood of the House, but I do want to hear the speaker. The member for Durham.

**Mr. O'Toole:** I think it's important for those listening tonight to realize that the last two weeks have been dominated by a lack of accountability by a government that's flushed out \$32 million of your taxpayer dollars, hard-earned money. Some of it would be the health premium, the \$2.6 billion that they've collected in this tax they promised not to do. Part of that money is definitely in that bundle right there, the \$2.6 billion, as

well as other monies. Today, I heard a number of \$1.7 billion that Minister Sorbara mentioned in his remarks. I'm sure he regrets saying that number, because now it's a larger amount that's somewhat circumspect.

Basically we refer to the Toronto Star as the Liberal briefing notes. The Toronto Star is basically the Liberal briefing note. In this particular bill, we do find some agreeable, harmonious sections that our critic, Tim Hudak, has spoken to here in the House at some time, although it's been limited. It says, "Many of the grant recipients"—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. O'Toole:** —"are respected community groups, including the Maytree Foundation, Frontier College and COSTI Immigrant Services.

"The largest beneficiary was the UJA (United Jewish Appeal) Federation, which received \$15 million of the \$20.4 million granted in the most recent year."

The point is that if there's nothing to hide, why won't they call in the auditor? Mr. McCarter is the auditor of the province of Ontario. He would just love to look at this file and review the application process, review the money granted. Was there an appropriate process of spending taxpayers' money? Probably there was. But the point that our leader, John Tory, has been trying to make is that the whole issue is about accountability.

To me, it's unprecedented: There was a letter sent to the Auditor General, dated May 1, signed by every single member in opposition. It says:

"Such practices pose significant questions regarding the transparency and integrity of government. In particular our concerns centre around the following"—and goes on to list both Howard Hampton as well as our leader, John Tory.

"Ontarians deserve a full accounting of:

"—how much money exists in secret funds"—the slush fund;

"—how it is being spent"—accountability;

"—for what purpose" it is being spent;

"—who is receiving these funds;

"—how these recipients are selected."

Those are fair questions of a very neutral nature.

As I said before, it isn't Bill 174, substantively; it's the time allocation motion, the relentless attack using the rules to exempt opposition debate time. I've tried to bring the attention of this House, without much success, I might add, and it's in that vein—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound has asked me to complete my remarks; my own party is asking me to wrap it up here.

It's a time allocation motion, it's a budget bill, so I'm not allowed to move adjournment of the debate anymore. I'm not allowed to adjourn the House. I'm not allowed to speak on the bill.

**Mr. Hudak:** Adjourn the bill.

**Mr. O'Toole:** I move that we adjourn the bill right now.

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** Just sit down now.

**Mr. O'Toole:** I will relinquish the floor to the NDP, who will have much to say on this bill.

**Ms. DiNovo:** I would like to say that it's a pleasure to speak on Bill 174. I don't know that it's a pleasure; it's a duty I perform with some degree of trepidation, because, of course, I heard from the Minister of Health Promotion, who said that part of the aim of this bill is to stop frustrating the small business community. I can tell you what does, in fact, frustrate the small business community.

TABIA, the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas, had their general meeting last night, and TABIA talked about what they'd like to see in a tax reform bill. They'd like to see the business education tax reformed, not sometime never, which is what the budget does, but now. I'm going to quote Mr. Lionel Miskin, who looks after their tax matters—remember, this is all of Toronto's small businesses: "The provincial levy"—he's talking about the business education tax—"is hurting Toronto very badly.... It is contributing to the erosion of the city's commercial base."

Viewers at home may wonder what that looks like. Well, it looks like this: In Toronto, the education tax paid on a commercially assessed property of \$0.5 million is about \$11,100, whereas in Halton it's about \$7,650. There's no rationale for this. That is why I brought in a resolution on TABIA's behalf that was dated December 12: "That, in the opinion of this House, the property tax rate levied by the province on small business should be applied more equitably across the province, and the tax rate for small business should be set at the same rate for the entire GTA."

Of course, we're also asking for an uploading of the downloads on the city so that small business isn't hit by another tax increase. That's what small business wants.

What else frustrates small business? Well, I'll tell you. It frustrates small business when they see politicians in this House give themselves a 31% pay increase in eight days but move some reform of the business education tax over five years. That frustrates them.

What also frustrates them is the lack of transparency and accountability with the \$30-million-plus that flows out of this place with no accounting, no criteria and refusal to allow the Auditor General to come in and look at the books. That frustrates small business. Anybody who has run a small business knows subterfuge when they see it. They know stonewalling; they know the lack of answers that are given in this place. They know the political dance when they see it danced, and it's certainly danced across the way. That's what is critical and really frustrating, not only to small business but to all of Ontario.

In light of that, I move adjournment of this debate.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Ms.—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** —DiNovo—thank you; sometimes I can remember first names first—from Parkdale-High Park has moved adjournment of the debate.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 2030 to 2100.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour, please stand to be counted by the clerks.

All those opposed, please stand to be counted by the clerks.

**The Deputy Clerk:** The ayes are 6; the nays are 31.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

The member for Parkdale-High Park.

**Ms. DiNovo:** Again, it's a pleasure to rise in this House. I might want to comment, just for those who are watching tonight and wondering why we are ringing bells, why we're asking for adjournments.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. DiNovo:** I hear my colleagues—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. If we listen carefully, we may find out why.

The member for Parkdale-High Park.

**Ms. DiNovo:** It's a sad day when a woman is shouted down by those opposing.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. Thank you.

The member for Parkdale-High Park.

**Ms. DiNovo:** I just wanted to explain, for those who are watching at home, that what you're seeing is incredible frustration, on this side of the House, with a government that is simply not responding to questions from the opposition. They're stonewalling; they're dancing and skirting around an issue. We're asking for the auditor to have a look at the books. We want to know where the \$30 million plus went and why. We also want to know why so many groups in this province who are deserving, who represent immigrant communities, do not get that money. Again, no answer is forthcoming, so this is the only means left to us. Therefore, I move adjournment of the House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Ms. DiNovo has moved adjournment of the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 2103 to 2133.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour, please stand to be counted by the Clerk.

Those opposed, please stand to be counted by the Clerk.

**The Deputy Clerk:** The ayes are 7; the nays are 30.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

Mr. Watson has moved government notice of motion number 362.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.



Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 2135 to 2145.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Caplan, David  
Chan, Michael  
Duguid, Brad  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Gerretsen, John  
Hoy, Pat

Jeffrey, Linda  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Levac, Dave  
Marsales, Judy  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Patten, Richard

Qaadri, Shafiq  
Racco, Mario G.  
Ramal, Khalil  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Sergio, Mario  
Watson, Jim  
Wilkinson, John  
Zimmer, David

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Amott, Ted  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Hudak, Tim

Marchese, Rosario  
Munro, Julia  
Murdoch, Bill

O'Toole, John  
Savoline, Joyce

**The Deputy Clerk:** The ayes are 30; the nays are 8.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

It being past 9:30 of the clock, this House is adjourned until Thursday, May 10, at 10 o'clock.

*The House adjourned at 2147.*

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Ernie Parsons, Khalil Ramal  
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**Thursday 10 May 2007**

**Jeudi 10 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 10 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 10 mai 2007

*The House met at 1000.  
Prayers.*

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

### PRESCRIPTION MONITORING ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 SUR LA SURVEILLANCE PHARMACEUTIQUE

Mr. Ramal moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 108, An Act to monitor the prescribing of certain drugs / Projet de loi 108, Loi visant à surveiller la prescription de certains médicaments.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Pursuant to standing order 96, Mr. Ramal, you have up to 10 minutes. The floor is yours.

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe):** I am privileged and honoured to be given the chance to introduce this bill, Bill 108, An Act to monitor the prescribing of certain drugs.

Before I start, I'd like to introduce and welcome, in the west gallery, our guests today: Ada Giudice-Tompson and Rick Tompson, who lost a family member; Laurie Miller, who also lost a family member; and Marvin Siegel, a supporter of the bill and also a patient advocate. Hopefully all of my colleagues will join me to welcome the guests who came here today.

Very often in this place we introduce a bill concerning a certain political issue to advance our political careers, to mention and to indicate about certain issues in our ridings across the province of Ontario or to score a political point. But this has nothing to do with a political point and has nothing to do with political issues. Today I will speak about a humanitarian aspect of our life, about a humanitarian issue and about the lives of many people across the province of Ontario who suffer from this very important issue.

Two years ago, a lady came to my office. She explained to me about this important subject, which is to create monitoring for the prescription of certain drugs. That lady first lost her husband, and a year or two years later she lost her son—all due to narcotic drugs being prescribed and dispensed and people taking them without any monitoring. And what happened? Two overdosed and they died.

This issue touched my heart. I brought it to this place. I tried to explain it to the Minister of Health, to many

people, to my colleagues, and then I started reading about it. I went to the Internet. I talked to many people, and many people phoned me back. They explained to me how important this topic is to them, because some of them lost their family members, some of them lost friends, and some of them lost loved ones. And all of us in this province lost a lot of great Ontarians.

In this province, our role as MPPs is to be the voice of the people we represent, to bring forward issues that concern many people in this province. That's why today I've been given the honour to introduce such an important bill for many people across the province of Ontario—especially when I read the statistics. In 2003, 101 Ontarians died from narcotic drug overdoses.

Many doctors and physicians prescribe medications wisely. Many people know what they're doing, but certain people cannot take those drugs. For a certain small segment of the specialized among us, they make a mistake. Therefore, by creating a monitoring board to oversee the conduct of physicians and doctors and people dispensing drugs, I think we'll eliminate the suffering of many people in this province.

Many provinces in this great country of Canada have passed laws to create monitoring boards to oversee the dispensing of drugs in their provinces. So I hope after we listen to people debate this bill, on our side and the opposition side, we'll get support for one direction in order to first create awareness and convince the Ministry of Health to adopt the bill and include it in the many different great bills that have been introduced through our mandate.

Statistics show that so many people, for some reason, cannot take the drugs. For some reason too, some physicians and doctors think that it's an easy thing to quiet someone's pain by giving them drugs. The patients become addicted to them and establish terrible health conditions, psychological conditions, because they're very addictive. And then what happens? A tragedy happens: people die.

We don't want to see the suffering. The people who die from these narcotic drugs leave, but their families stay around. They stay with memories, with history, especially when your loved one was a young individual who was trying to make a future for himself or herself. Because of a prescription overdose, they lose their lives, and they leave grief and sadness behind them.

That's why I'm introducing this bill today. I'm hoping that all my colleagues on both sides of the House will give me their support so that we can proceed to third reading, pass the bill, proclaim it and have it become law



in the province of Ontario. I think all our guests this morning in the gallery hope to see this bill passed, and many other Ontarians who cannot be with us today want to see it passed, because it's very important.

As I mentioned at the beginning, it's not a political bill. It's not trying to advance my political career or score any points against any party. My point today is to score points for supporting a human tragedy and to save lives.

Our statistics show that so many people in the province of Ontario and so many people across Canada—almost 125,000 people across Canada are addicted to drugs: cocaine, opium, many different narcotics. I also want to tell you that there are so many legal drugs being used on the streets, because so many people receive them legitimately but give them away—by selling them, by giving them to anyone—and other people get addicted to them, without any monitoring. That's why we're losing lives.

1010

By creating a board to monitor the dispensing of those drugs, I think we'd be doing a great job for humanity, a great job for Ontarians, and a great job for the great people of Canada.

I know that on the streets of London and the streets of Toronto, many people get lost and lose their lives, because for many different reasons, they get addicted to something—something they don't want to be attracted to. But as human beings, we are very fragile. We get affected sometimes by emotional things, by a tragedy, by circumstances. Sometimes we lose our job. We divorce. For many different reasons, we are affected psychologically, and we think taking narcotic drugs will help us to control ourselves, to maintain our personality, give us some kind of forgiveness or help us to forget our problems. That's why we get addicted to something that will kill us in the future.

I think by creating a monitoring board, we will help many people. I know many different colleagues are going to speak to this bill, especially my colleague from Etobicoke North, who is a doctor. He knows the importance of prescribing and dispensing drugs. At many times I've gone to him, and I've taken his advice about certain drugs. Because for so many drugs which have been admitted by the federal government and supported by the province and put on a list to be covered by OHIP, we don't understand the explanation of the drugs. We don't know what it means, because not all of us are doctors or specialists or chemists. We know the chemical structure of some drugs, the side effects of the drugs, but some of them will affect us badly. Some of them will cause much harm to our lives, to our friends, to our loved ones and to our family members.

That's why I'm hoping I will get the support of all members of the House, because it's a very important issue—not just for us but for many great Ontarians and the future of this province.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** My appreciation goes to the member for London–Fanshawe,

who has brought forward Bill 108, An Act to monitor the prescribing of certain drugs. It's obvious, in listening to him, that he is very passionate. He obviously has been moved to action as a result of visits and conversations that he has had with constituents in his community, and I want to welcome those individuals here today.

I think the role of an MPP is exactly this. Obviously, on a regular basis, we have communications, we listen to the concerns of our constituents, and if we see an opportunity to move an issue forward, to make sure that some action is taken, that awareness is raised, we have that opportunity in private members' hour to do so. This member from London–Fanshawe has done exactly that: He has brought forward this bill.

This bill ostensibly would establish a program for monitoring the prescription of certain drugs in order to promote the appropriate use of the monitored drugs and the reduction of their abuse and misuse.

The bill proposes to create an Ontario prescription monitoring board. It says that the board would include representatives from the CPSO, the RCDSO and the OCP. It would be administered by an administrator, and it would require that prescribers and pharmacists give access of information to the administrator, including medical records that the administrator reasonably requires to achieve the objectives of the program. It would also extend protection to those who act in good faith to disclose information or documents in a manner required by this act.

I would certainly concur with the member: This is a serious issue. I think we've all heard from constituents, in our roles as MPPs, about individuals who unfortunately have lost loved ones as a result of drug use.

I would suggest, and I've had the opportunity to consult with some of the groups that are going to be impacted by this type of legislation, that although this bill is well intended and although there may well be very, very good reason to establish this type of a board, an Ontario prescription monitoring board, it's extremely important that we take the time to do the due diligence and consult with the individuals who are going to be impacted, because as I say, this well could be the solution for reducing the incidence of abuse and misuse of drugs. However, there has not been consultation with any of these stakeholders or any of the representatives, and I think we need to take a look at how large this problem is and how we can best resolve this problem.

I think as the bill is currently worded, it is probably too broad. Certainly, we need to make sure that when we introduce legislation, we have support and we are capable of actually doing what the bill is proposing to do. We can't simply have another level of bureaucracy and not achieve its objective of reducing abuse and misuse.

I think this bill does speak to a commitment that we need to always have in the window, and that is patient safety, so this bill is certainly on the right track because it is an attempt to make sure that the government takes steps to promote patient safety. We certainly do support safe prescribing, and we need to do everything we can to



protect the public. Part of what we obviously need to do is to focus our efforts on establishing electronic medical records for all Ontarians, which currently we don't have.

Certainly, I think the timing of this bill is very appropriate. There's a lot of merit in this bill, and I would hope that as a result of the member coming forward and raising our awareness of this issue, we could bring together the colleges that are being proposed to be representatives, that we could bring forward the Ministry of Health, that we could bring forward and include in this the nurses, because I think nurses have a lot of information. Perhaps what we need to do is to first set up a working group to develop a consistent protocol and take a look at this issue: How widespread is the issue and how can we most appropriately deal with this issue? Because it is a real issue. I applaud the member for bringing it forward.

We know there are abuses, so certainly this notion of monitoring the prescribing of certain drugs is one that is opportune at the present time. I think we all know of very troubling cases related to inappropriate prescriptions. If you take a look at it, perhaps it makes good common sense to create a central agency that could monitor the prescription of drugs.

So I would highly recommend that we take a further look, because this bill makes a good start, but I think now it's important that whatever we introduce would be well supported by the people in the field, that if an agency were to be set up, it would do the job that it is intended to do, and that is to reduce the abuse and misuse, and of course we need to make sure that the colleges, if they're going to be involved in this, are in a position where they actually can do what is intended here. This is certainly a worthwhile agency for consideration, but without further consultation and without further examination of some of the details as to how it would be established and what it would actually do, and what type of regulations are going to be necessary to make it function, I think it would be premature to support this moving forward, simply because the stakeholders, the people who are going to be involved in trying to take action to reduce the abuse and misuse, have not been involved in consultation. But having said that, in talking to those stakeholders, there is an interest on their part to be involved in further consultation. Certainly they think the timing is appropriate, and possibly this is the most appropriate vehicle.

1020

I applaud the member from London-Fanshawe. I appreciate his representation of his constituents. I appreciate that he's brought this issue forward because it is a very serious issue and he has raised awareness. I would hope it would prompt the government to move forward and take a look at the problem and identify how we can best address this particular problem and this particular issue, which is serious, take a look at what other provinces have done and then, if it is determined that this would be the most appropriate vehicle, this particular Ontario prescription monitoring board, move forward with its creation. So thank you to member, and I appreciate your bringing this forward and raising this for our public attention.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale-High Park):** I too commend the member from London-Fanshawe for addressing an important issue and an important problem and welcome the visitors to the gallery.

Certainly as the representative for Parkdale-High Park, I've had a great deal of experience with those with addiction and mental health issues. The two tend to go hand in hand, as we all know. Along with many others in my community, we started a West End Angels program, a drop-in for those with mental health and addiction issues, and work very closely with a wonderful organization in my riding, Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre that feeds about a thousand people a month, many of those with mental health and addiction issues.

In fact, in response to those in our riding, we set up a round table of caregivers and we looked at the issue of narcotic abuse and use and what we could do to address it. One of the stumbling blocks we initially came over was not so much the monitoring, but the fact that Ontario does not have a drug strategy at all, and this is a huge oversight. The people at home will ring with this when they recognize that the city of Toronto has an excellent drug strategy. In fact, Susan Shepherd, who helped develop that drug strategy, sits on our board and is looking at developing a Parkdale-High Park drug strategy that we hope we might bring forward to become an Ontario-wide strategy, because we certainly need one.

When it comes to the actual use and monitoring of narcotics and other drugs, I'd like to—because I think this is an important bill and does take a first step towards an issue that needs addressing: that we have both an over-prescription of drugs and an underprescription of drugs problem in this province, and it's not only narcotics. I'm quoting here from a CTV news release—this is earlier this month—which says, “Seniors prescribed antidepressants such as Prozac, Paxil and Zoloft are almost five times more likely to commit suicide during the first month on the drugs than those given other medication to treat depression, a study suggests.”

“The research, conducted in Canada, adds to the controversy already surrounding popular selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors or ‘SSRI’ drugs.”

Here's a quote from Dr. Juurlink, lead author of the study by the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences. He says, “Doctors are way too liberal with these drugs” in prescribing them. So there is another case of an over-prescription of drugs.

Then, on the other side, there's underprescription. Again, from the same day that that CTV article came out on their website, we know that a Mr. Teotonio had just paid \$40,000 for injections at a private clinic in Toronto. He said, “It should be plain for all to see.... It's bad enough to have a terrible disease”—cancer, in his case—“without having to worry about drug accessibility.”

John Colacci, who was treated at his hospital, took Avastin, and it cost him \$36,000. He said, “I expect more from the Ontario government, not just for me but for every other Ontarian who could encounter this problem.”

Wendy Mundell paid \$18,000 up front for Avastin last year and was lucky to receive some financial assistance



afterwards from a third party benefit package. She asks, "Why doesn't this government agree that my life is worth \$18,000?" Again, when we look at an Ontario-wide drug strategy, we should look at who's not getting the drugs they need as well as those who are getting too many drugs and drugs that they don't need.

The first thing I did when I did research for this bill was consult a friend, a constituent and someone I trust in the matter of pharmaceuticals, because he's the director of the pharmacy services at Trillium Health Centre, Dr. Allan Mills. He sent me a very enlightening e-mail about what perhaps needs to go into this bill before we consider passing it. First of all, he says that in the province of BC, where they have similar legislation, the "program was well-intentioned but was not successful ... as it relied on copies of the prescriptions being sent to the central processing office where they would be entered in the computer due to difficulties with gathering and entering the data. An estimate in 1995"—when they looked at this initially, when they introduced it—"suggested that 20% of the data was lost due to the ineffectiveness of the process. It wasn't"—and here's the critical point he's making about the BC system—"until the Pharmanet system was introduced that the process finally worked. This system made the triplicate process a little redundant as each prescription entered into a pharmacy computer was logged on a provincial database. This made it easy to track utilization and identify cases of diversion"—drug diversion.

So here's the problem with the act as written. He says:

"[W]e don't have an electronic database for prescriptions, which would be the backbone of such a system. Many have been asking for this for years, but it has never been made a priority" by this government. "Without this infrastructure (which could be used for more than just narcotic diversion"—as I pointed out in the case of the SSRIs—"i.e. identifying medications people are on at home when they come into ER) it would be a false sense of security at best, a waste of time and money at worst.

"Again, the act was well intentioned, but it could also be used as a witch hunt to prevent prescribers from giving those patients who need ... narcotics the medications they require." For example, he says, "(palliative care physicians would be 'picked up by the system' because they would prescribe these agents at a higher-than-normal rate—their patients require the medications...). The other concern would be that artificial barriers must not be put up that would prevent patients from getting their prescriptions filled. Since many pharmacies are worried about security of the agents and robberies in some places, it can be hard enough to get straight narcotics filled at a neighbourhood pharmacy—can you imagine if they started to be identified as 'high dispensers' and had to justify their dispensing? There has to be a balance between access and diversion risk. And this has to include participation"—which really echoes some of what we heard from the member from Kitchener–Waterloo—"from the Ontario College of Pharmacists, Ontario College of Dental Surgeons and the Ontario College of

Physicians and Surgeons. It is really important that this be considered as a means to prevent diversion" but "not to limit practice."

I can also imagine that in areas where there is a high concentration of seniors, for example, or a high concentration of the disabled, that particular pharmacy might be targeted. But I think the critical point he's making, other than that, is that without the database, this is pretty well a bill without teeth. Again, I hearken back to the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, who says that what's really needed here is consultation, because, trust me, if I can find this out in a couple of hours of research between about 1 o'clock and 3 o'clock this morning, I'm sure, if we get the stakeholders around the table, we'll get a great deal more input on how to put teeth into this legislation and actually make it what it should be and what I think the member from London–Fanshawe and all the stakeholders want it to be. I am not arguing against this being a good first step; I'm concerned that it not just be a first step but that it go the whole distance.

I always love talking about health care, because it gives me a chance to talk about, of course, our health care system and, interestingly enough, bring forward what should be in place, not only in the province of Ontario but across this country of ours, and that is a pharmacare strategy. One of the aspects of Canada that makes us so Canadian and so proud to be Canadian is our medicare system, and that medicare system is under threat here provincially and of course nationally as well. One of the ways in which it is under threat is—the example I gave you of the folks who cannot afford to pay for cancer drugs and who need those cancer drugs. So already we have a two-tier system: one for those who can afford the drugs and one for those who cannot afford the drugs. This is pretty clear across the board in a lot of different areas. For people with children with autism, they know this directly—again, where there's not funding available.

### 1030

One doesn't need to do much research to discover some of the solutions to that problem. The Canadian Health Coalition and the Ontario Health Coalition have both done work on this, and I'd like to just read what their recommendations are for a pharmacare system:

"(1) Universal public drug insurance:

"—expand first-dollar coverage according to the principles of the Canada Health Act: no user fees, co-payments or premiums for insured first-line therapeutic treatments;

"—fully fund the insurance plan through the public sector. Governments self-insure to control costs. No partnerships with the private sector; and

"—options"—as Roy Romanow called for—"for 'catastrophic' drug coverage (covering costs that exceed high thresholds)...." We think of those who suffer with AIDS and how much it costs them for prescription drugs. Only the wealthy can afford them.

"(2) National formulary for essential drugs:

"—insure first-line therapies on a national formulary based on evidence of efficacy; and



“—use nationally integrated cost-management methods, including bulk purchasing, cost-volume price negotiations, and reference-based pricing.” These are things that we could do to bring the costs way down.

“(3) Drug regulation that puts safety and efficacy first”—and behind this, of course, we’re also talking about that database that we need, and it really is quite outrageous that we don’t have it. Imagine that you are in a coma or you’re unconscious or you’re taken into the emergency ward and nobody knows what drugs you’re on. This should be computerized today—yesterday. Without that, a monitoring system doesn’t make a lot of sense.

“(4) Reform of the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board.” We also need that.

I don’t have a lot of time, so I’m just going to read the main points: accountable and transparent decision-making; patent reform; regulation of drug promotion and marketing; a national prescribing service; establish a public drug information system, which is what this bill wants to take one small step toward; and regulation for ethical conduct in clinical trials and research.

I really highly recommend their report, which is many, many pages in length and has been signed on to by a broad swath of stakeholders in the health community—because we get that we do not have a true medicare system without a pharmacare system as well.

I did promise the Ontario Health Coalition, so I will—because it is Nursing Week, and we’ve heard it heralded in this House—make mention of another attempt to really chip away at our medicare system in Ontario, and that is this move to private-public hospitals. They say, in no uncertain terms—300 nurses signed on to this: “Hospitals are not commodities to be bought and sold on the market as revenue streams to make money for investors. They are valued public institutions upon which our communities rely for life-enhancing and life-prolonging care.”

They are absolutely and steadfastly against the development of these hospitals, which are already running into huge cost overruns before they’re even built. I’m thinking of Brampton and others that we’ve heard about many times in this House.

With just a few minutes remaining, I would say that one of the major concerns that has come out from our own roundtable in Parkdale–High Park that we need to address right away for those who suffer from drug addiction issues is more rehabilitation beds. We need more treatment options. We are turning people away by the thousands to die on the streets of our city because of lack of housing, lack of treatment, ODSP that doesn’t pay for them to eat and pay their rent. This is what we need, and this is the answer to those who are out there suffering from addiction issues right now. It’s clear that this is not going to help that.

Having said that, are we supportive? We’re supportive of this as a baby step. We would love, like the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, to see stakeholders around a table discussing this, because as I say, if this much comes out of an evening’s work of research from the director of pharmacy services at Trillium hospital, then surely a

great deal more needs to go into this bill in terms of regulations, in terms of teeth, in terms of really making it what it needs to be. So we need that right away, as well as transparency and openness.

Even further than that, we need a pharmacare plan that actually pays for the drugs that those who have illness need and that helps to introduce a database system and an electronic monitoring system so that lives are saved. That’s what I think we all want as MPPs in this House. We all look out upon our ridings. There’s not one riding represented in this Parliament where we have not seen first-hand the devastation of addiction issues, the devastation of the lack of money in our health care system, the devastation of the lack of treatment beds.

I have folks coming to me all the time. They want treatment; they want rehabilitation. They cannot find it. It’s only there for the rich. It is not there for the poor and it’s not even there for the middle class, because it’s profoundly expensive. We need treatment options; we need beds for those suffering with addictions. We need all the stakeholders, all the caregivers, to sit around a table, just like we’re doing in Parkdale–High Park, and come up with real solutions. We need to put teeth into this baby step of a bill. We need to have a database that monitors the prescribing of drugs and that looks at who gets what so that when that person comes into the emergency room and is unconscious, we know what they’re on, we know what perhaps they’re overdosing on, so we’re not overprescribing yet again when they get into the hospital or prescribing the wrong medication when they get into the hospital.

It has been a pleasure to speak on this. We’ve all of us lost loved ones. My prayers and my thoughts go out to the family and those in the gallery. Rest assured that I and the New Democratic Party will do everything we can to make a difference in this province for you.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** It’s a pleasure to speak in conjunction with my good friend from London–Fanshawe, my seatmate. I want to congratulate him for taking a leadership role on this particular issue.

I’m wont to talk about issues by example, because I think that’s one of the ways I can really understand issues or have a better comprehension. Let me just say that when it comes to drugs and prescription drugs and what we take in our lives, I’m not an expert, but I want to talk about some experiences.

Less than a year ago I had the misfortune of losing my father. He was quite ill for quite a while. I had the opportunity to spend the last month with him on a daily basis and I knew the number of drugs that he took. I took him to the doctor—and this is no fault of the medical profession by any means, because I think those folks in the medical profession really try to do the best they can. In a couple of instances we’d go to a specialist or a doctor who said, “You’ve got to stop taking that drug because this is why this is happening to you,” and they’d give him something else. He wasn’t well, so a couple of weeks later I’d take him somewhere else, because he couldn’t drive anymore.



In a period of only a month—here's somebody who was 84 years old when he passed away, but for the last couple of years he was having a really difficult time. Sad to say, I actually only spent maybe six weeks with him every day, but he'd been doing this for the last couple of years. Like I say, the profession was very kind to him, they were very good, but he had some challenges with some drugs and he was bouncing back and forth. That really gives you some sense—I touch wood that I'm not dependent on any particular drug today and hopefully can stay that way.

But let me tell you of another story about a neighbour of mine where I live in Brighton. She's an elderly lady. About 10 years ago—and she was fairly healthy all her life, but over the course of her life, and I don't know the whole history, she'd been prescribed different drugs for different symptoms. Of course, she didn't know any better; she kept on taking these drugs. It came to a point where one day they had to rush her to the hospital. The prognosis wasn't very good. Thank God one of the doctors in the emergency room, after trying to figure out what the problem was—she was very ill. As a matter of fact, they told her husband that she might not come home.

One of the things they normally do in the hospital when you go into emergency is they check what kind of drugs you take. She had quite an array of drugs that she was taking; some were over the counter because when she got a headache she took this and so forth; some were prescribed. The doctor in the emergency room decided to take all the drugs away: "Let's see what happens. I'm sure it's more complicated, but I'm trying to make it as simple as I can." She suffered dearly for a couple of days, maybe a week, with no drugs—some withdrawals. I'm not sure of the age of this person—this happened about 10 years ago—but she's probably in her mid-80s. I saw her a couple of weeks ago and she's doing great. All she takes now when she gets a really bad headache sometimes is an aspirin. But she knows that she can only take it once or twice and then she doesn't take it anymore.

1040

I'm not a chemist; I'm not a doctor. I don't know what those drugs do, but these are real-life experiences that I was able to be associated with, and I know the challenges that those people went through. Whether this bill fixes the problem, I don't know for sure, but any little thing we can do to alleviate those problems we might face I think we need to do in this House. So I will be supporting this bill. If it goes to committee and if it could be made better, all the power to it. Along with my colleagues from all sides of the House, I hope we can move forward and make life better for everybody in Ontario.

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** I'm pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill 108, the Prescription Monitoring Act, 2007, brought forward by my colleague from London–Fanshawe. He spoke quite passionately about the need for more awareness when he introduced the bill. It's nice to have private members' time on Thursday mornings so that we can have some

non-partisan discussions and issues, and have more public debate and more awareness of situations out there, like prescription monitoring for certain drugs.

I want to thank the families who are in the gallery and who've been touched by the tragedy of losing someone to a prescription narcotic overdose. I want to have them stand and acknowledge that they're here today.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Scott:** They have been tireless in trying to bring this problem to the attention of legislators, to get the rules changed and to talk with all the stakeholders.

For some of you who don't know—I guess some in the gallery know—I was a nurse for 20 years before I had the opportunity to be elected as the member for Haliburton–Victoria–Brock—

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** And an excellent nurse too.

**Ms. Scott:** Thank you to the member from Peterborough for the compliment.

You do see things first-hand as a nurse—problems—and we say, "What can we do to make this better? This system is not right. We have to be able to protect people in a better way."

The articles that were in the Star—I'm going to mention one from the Toronto Star from April 24 and part of one from April 25. They describe—I know the family members are present in the gallery—the situation that occurred in the family, how they knew there was something wrong in the system, and how they couldn't get access to correct it and rectify it so that other families didn't go through it. It's a very tragic story—a young man who was initially treated for kidney stones and then started taking medication. It's described here in the Toronto Star. It has pharmacy records that show he was taking a plethora of pills—Valium, Oxycocet, Endocet, Dilaudid, anti-depressants and even Ritalin—all prescribed by a doctor. More than 10,000 pills over 14 months—it's in the article—were prescribed.

So I think we need to highlight the seriousness and how things can just get out of hand. This young man went in for kidney stones and was over-prescribed narcotic medications. They're not just habit-forming; they're highly addictive. As I talk to the families and how there's not enough awareness of how highly addictive these medications can be—just the information they're given isn't correct. They aren't aware. They love their family members, and their family members aren't aware that this is highly addictive. And once they get on them, once they realize that an addiction has formed, there aren't enough resources, clinics or help. Through just the purpose of going in for medications for kidney stones and how that evolved, that young man ended up losing his life. That should not have happened; it did happen. His family has worked tirelessly to bring this issue forward.

We all collectively—there have been many, many stakeholders mentioned here today that are willing: the Ontario Medical Association, the College of Pharmacists, physicians and surgeons, dental surgeons and nurses—need to get in the loop, as we say; we all need to be on



the same page. We should hear from the families of these victims of instances that have not happened.

When you think that this young man has been taken from us, and the other family members who were lost because of over-prescription—there's the College of Physicians and Surgeons; I know they're there, and I know that situation specifically has been dealt with, but what else is going on that we don't know about? Patients who go in for symptoms don't have the knowledge of medications or what they're being prescribed for, so we have to do a better job of informing the families, the patients, of what these medications are composed of, how highly addictive—not just habit-forming; sometimes the words “habit-forming,” I'm told, are in there, but they are highly addictive. Unless we make them aware—there is certainly, I know, in the hospitals, short-time use of some narcotics, but they're monitored in the system, and it's for short-term, it's for pain relief until they can get through the worst of the healing.

When physicians can over-prescribe to the extent that they do, I think it speaks to the fact that we have to have better checks in the system. It was mentioned earlier about eHealth, electronic medical records. That's been in the papers a lot. But what we're trying to establish here is communication between doctors and pharmacies of patient records. The privacy issue, certainly, we acknowledge and are working with. But in the hospital setting, when I was in emergency—when they come in, and 25% of the reason they come in is related to medications, that's a red flag for all of us. I don't think any levels of government have moved quickly enough to establish the information sharing that is needed to protect patients who come in. That's big hole in our system that we need to address.

I want to thank the member from London-Fanshawe for bringing this forward, for this debate that we're having this morning. The families—I know it's very hard for you to come here and to relive some experiences, but I just want to say thank you very much for coming and for your tireless efforts. Thank you.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** At the outset, I would first of all like to declare my complete support of this particular bill brought by the honourable member from London-Fanshawe, Dr. Khalil Ramal.

I know that our member from London-Fanshawe has been passionate on a number of fronts, not only in representing the interests of his community, his own riding, but also more broadly: Canada's diverse communities, and now, today, specifically with individuals who are here represented by people in the gallery today who have had such negative and life-changing experiences with these particular groups of medications that we're speaking about.

I'll speak here in a number of different capacities: as the MPP for Etobicoke North; as you'll know, I'm the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health Promotion; and of course as a physician. In those various capacities all wrapped into one, I think that more scrutiny, more monitoring, more measurement of outcomes in

any realm of scientific endeavour, whether it's medicine or other realms, is certainly going to serve the interests of the province of Ontario and our people. For example, the Hippocratic oath, which I remember being administered some 20 years ago at the University of Toronto—one of its first tenets is the idea of “above all else, do no harm,” or in Latin, “primum non nocere.”

I think the honourable member from London-Fanshawe very rightly brings this to our attention, that when individuals, in whatever pain situation it may be—whether it's, for example, seeking treatment for an acute situation like kidney stones, or renal colic as we say, or for deeper and more long-lasting and possibly terminal illnesses, whether it's post-surgical pain or cancer pain or traumatic pain from, say, car accidents, motor vehicle accidents, and so on—when we as physicians are entrusted with the care of our patients, for hopefully restoring some semblance of order and well-being to mind, body and spirit, if in that situation the physician over-prescribes, whether it's narcotic medications or a whole host of other medications, of course the medical interest, the medical profession and the medical aspiration are not being fulfilled. So I wholeheartedly support this idea of a prescription monitoring board.

**1050**

At the same time, I would like to say, hopefully for the benefit of the members of this chamber, that there are a number of individuals—for example, we have four million Canadians who have arthritis and 20,000 individuals who are diagnosed on an annual basis with lung cancer, and there's a huge number of other pain situations—acute and chronic pain, acute on chronic pain and so on; there's a great deal of vocabulary attached to this. In those particular cases, some of these narcotic-level medications, hopefully used in a judicious manner, hopefully not over-prescribed, are in fact necessary. So I really have to bring this idea of balance to this particular discussion. Having said that, what I think the creation of a drug monitoring and prescription monitoring board, as brought forward by my colleague from London-Fanshawe, stipulates is that we must have more discussion on these issues; we must have continuing medical education, or CME, as we would say to physicians and other practitioners.

Our own Ministry of Health, by the way, has instituted what we call a MedsCheck, which is performed by pharmacists for their patients—it's now a billable service—in which they will actually analyze the prescriptions that patients are taking and hopefully use that as an alert to the various bodies, including physicians themselves, for potential conflicts, drug interactions, side effects, under-management as well or possibly over-prescription of these narcotics. Because of course, when we have public trust, not only as legislators but also as physicians, it's very important and imperative that we prescribe judiciously and appropriately. The medical teaching is: what is necessary, but kind of on the minimal side—not to over-prescribe and then unfortunately addict patients to these very powerful, important and useful but potentially



dangerous and, unfortunately, potentially lethal medications.

I would simply say that our perspective is certainly: Above all else, do no harm—*primum non nocere*—the medical motto. I would wholeheartedly support my honourable colleague Dr. Ramal, from London-Fanshawe, on his bill for a prescription monitoring board. It will bring scrutiny, it will measure outcomes and I think it will definitely serve the interests not only of individuals comprising the riding of London-Fanshawe but the people of Ontario broadly.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** First, let me congratulate the member from London-Fanshawe for this bill.

Briefly, why do we need this Prescription Monitoring Act? We know, for instance, that the prescribing of narcotics has increased significantly over the last few years. In 2003, 101 Ontarians died with narcotic drugs in their system. This was a tenfold increase over the past decade. Also in 2003, 2.8 million psychotropic drugs were dispensed, mostly in Ontario. That's the equivalent of two pills for every man, woman and child.

On April 25, the Toronto Star printed an article about a prominent Toronto psychiatrist who had been found guilty of professional misconduct for prescribing excessive amounts of narcotics to 23 patients. Over a 14-month period, this doctor prescribed one patient over 10,000 pills. Of course, that patient died of an overdose.

Let me give you an example that I myself have experienced in the riding I formerly represented. I was driving by the methadone clinic and saw a number of people standing in front of the entrance of this methadone clinic. I was wondering what they were hanging around for. What were they doing there? By further inquiry, I found out that some people who were standing in front of this clinic were actually buying and selling methadone. By further inquiry, I found out that if a patient went in and really made emotional requests to the doctor or to the dispensing agent, they could indeed get a bit more methadone that later could be sold on the street.

This bill is very necessary. Can this bill pass quickly? Of course it was said earlier that we need to have consultation with the stakeholders. Yes, that's very important, but remember this: The province of Manitoba passed Bill 107, and Mr. Ramal's bill is patterned after the Nova Scotia bill.

"The purpose of the bill is to establish a program for monitoring the prescription of certain drugs, to be designated by regulation of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, in order to promote the appropriate use of the monitored drugs and the reduction of their abuse and misuse. The bill proposes the creation of the Ontario Prescription Monitoring Board composed of directors that include representatives of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario and the Ontario College of Pharmacists, as well as persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council who are not members of these licensing authorities."

Just one more item: I think I would be remiss if I didn't mention that at present there is a shift in focus in terms of the health care system. In the past—and it might even be in the present—we were looking at patients who were sick, and the move is away from sick care to prevention. I want to give the McGuinty government full credit for establishing for the first time in the history of this province, and indeed in the history of Canada, a minister who is responsible for the promotion of health. That is a very significant issue.

Finally, the member from Parkdale-High Park mentioned earlier that, yes, there are social determinants of health that we must look at. We are making some steps in the right direction to ensure that some of these social determinants of health, which do cause illness, are being looked after at least to some degree. We need more housing, we need more education, and we need more nutrition and supplement programs. In short, we are going in the right direction, but we need more time.

Congratulations to the member and congratulations to the McGuinty government.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Ramal, you have up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Ramal:** First, I want to thank the member for Kitchener-Waterloo, who was the Minister of Health at one time; the member for Haliburton-Victoria-Brock, who has been a nurse for many years; the member for Etobicoke North, Dr. Qaadri, who is also a physician; and also the member for Parkdale-High Park, the member for Northumberland—my seatmate—the member for Davenport and all the people who are with us in the gallery.

I know it's a very important issue. I'm not going to take it lightly. Hopefully it will go for a third round. Also, we have to do a lot of work to strengthen the bill by consulting the stakeholders across Ontario: the doctors, the physicians, the nurses and the pharmacists. It's very important to bring all the people on board to create a strong bill that is able to serve the people of this province.

The member from Parkdale-High Park was talking a little bit about the bill, but she talked about different issues. Anyway, I want to thank her for in essence supporting the bill, and also all the members who spoke in support and brought very important elements to the discussion.

As you know, I'm not a physician, I'm not a pharmacist, I'm not a chemist, but I've heard a lot of stories from the media, from talking to people about the importance of creating such a board to monitor the dispensing of pills and narcotic drugs that can harm a lot of people. So we are here in this place to protect the people of Ontario and create rules and laws and regulations to make sure that all the people live in peace and harmony and are safe.

As we mentioned, not all of us are experts about drugs, not all of us know exactly how we can use them. A lot of people misuse those drugs, and by misusing them, it affects a lot of lives. That's why I'm introducing



this bill today and I'm looking forward to seeing support from both sides of the House.

1100

## LINCOLN ALEXANDER DAY ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 SUR LE JOUR DE LINCOLN ALEXANDER

Ms. Mossop moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 220, An Act to proclaim Lincoln Alexander Day /  
Projet de loi 220, Loi proclamant le Jour de Lincoln  
Alexander.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Pursuant to standing order 96, Ms. Mossop, you have up to 10 minutes. The floor is yours.

**Ms. Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek):** It was his voice that first engaged me and captured me: so varied, so deep and so rich, like the man himself. So today I move a bill to proclaim the third Wednesday in February in each year Lincoln Alexander Day in Ontario schools.

February is Black History Month, the third week in February is Heritage Week in Ontario and the third Monday in February is Heritage Day across Canada. Who among us embodies black history and our heritage as a province and as a country, growing towards tolerance and inclusion, more than our own oh, so accomplished, very charismatic and most generous Lincoln MacCauley Alexander?

I'm going to read out his many accomplishments for you. This could take a minute or two, and then I will get into the story of how we got to today.

Lincoln Alexander is a former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, 1985-91. He's the chair of both the Raptors Foundation and the Ontario Heritage Trust. He was named the greatest Hamiltonian of all time in June 2006, in a contest sponsored by the Hamilton Spectator newspaper. Mr. Alexander is a former federal Minister of Labour, a former chairman of the then Ontario Workers' Compensation Board and the former chair of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. He served as an MP for 11 years for the riding of Hamilton West.

Lincoln Alexander is a Companion of the Order of Canada, a member of the Order of Ontario, he received his B.A. from McMaster University and his L.L.B. from York University's Osgoode Hall. Lincoln Alexander is the recipient of six honorary Doctor of Law degrees and one honorary Doctor of Sacred Letters degree. He is a member on the boards of the University of Guelph, Doctors Hospital, the Shaw Festival, the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, chamberWorks ensemble of Hamilton, and he acts as a consultant to the board of George Weston Ltd. and is a member of the Quebecor Ontario advisory board.

The Lincoln M. Alexander Parkway, fondly known as the "Linc" in Hamilton, is named after him. He is an honorary colonel in the RCAF, an honorary commissioner of the OPP and honorary chief of the Toronto Fire

Services. He is the honorary chief of police—Toronto, York Regional Police and Hamilton Police Service—and he also serves as patron or honorary officer of several charitable organizations.

The genesis of this bill came when the Ontario Heritage Trust contacted me about Linc's 85th birthday, which is going to be celebrated next Thursday in an enormous bash, and they said, "Is there any way we could maybe have that day proclaimed as Lincoln Alexander Day in Ontario?" That led me to think, what better national holiday could we have in Canada than Lincoln Alexander Day in February, which is Black History Month, and in the middle of Heritage Week?

But, as all of you know in this chamber, getting things like that accomplished can be timely, and we didn't have a lot of time. We wanted something ready for this special occasion. I started to think about all that Linc was about, all that he had achieved and how he had gotten there, and his commitment and dedication, especially to education and to people. That's when I decided, maybe a first step to a national holiday could happen right here in this Legislature among all of us—maybe a little subversive, but we'll start with a first step towards a national holiday right here by declaring the third Wednesday in February to be Lincoln Alexander Day in Ontario schools. So that's how we got to where we are now.

The reason why schools—and I have to pick up this book that he wrote, his autobiography. It's called *Go to School, You're a Little Black Boy: The Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander: A Memoir*. On the back of this book, Linc writes: "Throughout my life I have believed thoroughly in the power of education, and that belief is the grand gift that my mother, Mae Rose, gave me. The title of this book, the quote, 'Go to school, you're a little black boy,' is hers, and I have used it to honour her insight and wisdom. Those words, her words, have been at the core of what I have accomplished in this life. She was a mere maid, but her knowledge and foresight transcended her station in life; she knew that accepting defeat was easy, but success was possible, and education was the vehicle to take you there. She was right, and it has." It has, indeed.

He grew up in a very white Canada in the Depression era, the son of a maid and a railroad porter. Blacks at that time were uncommon, and often unwelcome. In his book, he talks about the many times that he became angry, and he had many reasons to be angry—the injustices, the ugliness that he met in his fellow human beings in this world. One occasion was when he had already served in the military. He had been through law school—an excellent student. He landed a job interview. It was over the phone, and the interview went extremely well. He got to the end of the interview, and he asked the gentleman on the other end of the phone, "Would it make any difference to you if I was black?" There was a long pause. He did get a first-hand, one-on-one interview for that job, but in fact he did not get the job, and he didn't get it because he was black. He got angry—not the only time in his life he would be angry and face such injustice and such ugliness—but he never got mired in the anger.



He never let the futility of anger overtake him and defeat him. He always moved beyond it. He always looked deep inside people and found something good. In return, we would have the gift of that instant friendship that Linc offers. When he turns his gaze on you, you have his full attention. It is an amazing gift. It's like the sun beaming down on you, and that deep, rich voice reaches out to you, engages you and talks to you, not about trivial things. He doesn't chat about the weather; he gets right to the crux of the issue.

In government, we have many people who come to us. You're sort of like a walking dollar sign, in fact. You spend all your time with people coming to you wanting money, whether it's a group or an organization—all needy, all worthy. I got to know Linc better as the chair of the Ontario Heritage Trust, and while everybody else brought briefing notes and PowerPoint presentations and would spend half an hour on the preamble, he just walked in the room and said, "I need money. I want money for my heritage trust." He just got straight to the point. Why waste time? We all knew why he was there, and you know what? That's what made him a success. He didn't waste any time on trivialities. He always got to the point, always gets to the point, and always sticks to what is the most important in life.

So I was taken by the fact that he never allowed anger to overtake him. It's something that many of us do in life. Anger is often justified, but if it's not used as a catalyst to move beyond and to move to better things, then it can destroy us, destroy those who are angry.

When I was preparing my bill—I introduced it last week—I quickly realized, because I started having people come up to me and talk to me about this bill and the response to it, that what we would be doing this morning in private members' time was, in fact, not having a debate about my bill. My bill is an opportunity for each and every one of us to tell our favourite Linc stories, and there are many of them.

I had the opportunity to meet with Colin Millar, a former chief of police of Hamilton, the other evening. Colin Millar's father was Lincoln Alexander's law partner—one of those genuinely sincere people back in a time when blacks were not welcome—who welcomed him with open arms, and, as Linc says in his book, loved black, thought black was beautiful. Colin was telling me about the great relationship he has and the great affection he has for Lincoln Alexander. He told me one quick story, which I will try to relay here, and that is that Linc never drove. He never got his licence, he never learned how to drive. He did everything else in life. He went on to rub elbows with royalty, but I suppose because he was so busy doing other great things, he never learned how to drive. But now he is 85, and to conserve that good energy for good purposes, he uses one of these motorized scooters. So now, a man who has never driven in his life is scooting around Hamilton in one of these motorized scooters. Colin, being the police officer that he is by trade, says, "This man knows nothing about the rules of the road. He doesn't know what an advance green is. He goes scooting out into the road. People start honking, and

Linc just throws up his hand and waves because he thinks they're honking because they know it's him." And you know what? They do know it's him. Everybody knows Linc in Hamilton. People all across Canada know him, adore him, love him and are so honoured to be able to count him among their countrymen and among their friends.

There's so much for the students of Ontario to learn about not just black history, not just heritage, but about life and living a successful life and learning how to overcome life's toughest challenges and how to be one thing that's actually really hard to be in life sometimes: happy. I've seen Linc saddened, but he's never been truly unhappy. He's a happy man, and he is because he gives so much.

1110

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale-High Park):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I just want to introduce a class that's here from Humbercrest French immersion. We're delighted to have them here from my riding of Parkdale-High Park.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I'm pleased to rise as part of the debate on Bill 220, which recognizes the contributions of Lincoln Alexander by declaring Lincoln Alexander Day throughout public schools, not only in Hamilton and Niagara, where his name is well-known and he's made a tremendous impact, but across the province of Ontario, where similarly Lincoln Alexander has had a tremendous impact, and continues to do so, and is an inspiration for young people across this province. So I congratulate my colleague Ms. Mossop, my neighbour from the Stoney Creek riding, for bringing this forward today. It's something that can have a lasting impact on young people across the province of Ontario, and it's a chance for all of us who have interacted with Lincoln Alexander over the years to celebrate this incredible man.

As my colleague Ms. Mossop indicated, we all have our Linc stories to tell. I had a chance to work very closely with His Honour when I was the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation in 2001-02. Of course, Lincoln Alexander was the chair of the Ontario Heritage Trust, and he continues in that capacity today. And he was persuasive: You didn't say no to Lincoln Alexander. As Ms. Mossop indicated, you have all kinds of good projects that come forward on a regular basis, but whether it was with his eyes, his tone, his confidence or his passion for preserving our heritage, you just couldn't say no to Linc. We were pleased to work together in investing more funds in the Ontario Heritage Trust to help to rebuild some of the institutions that had not been in the shape that many of us would like to see them, and I'm pleased to see that further investments have continued in that regard.

It was a lot of fun doing those announcements with Linc, who has an extraordinary stature both physically and in his presence—incredible charisma—but also his infectious humour. It's absolutely impressive how he, in a few short words, will win over any crowd.

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** Nice guy.



**Mr. Hudak:** My colleague from Simcoe—Grey says, “Nice guy.” No doubt about it: a true gentleman in the classic sense of the word.

Not too long ago, actually, I was down—my colleague the Minister of Tourism, Mr. Bradley, was there, and Mr. Craitor from Niagara Falls as well—celebrating the Ontario Heritage Trust plaque for the Fenian raids. We all remember the Fenian—well, we don’t remember the Fenian raids per se; we’ve read about the Fenian raids.

**Mr. Wilson:** You probably do.

**Mr. Hudak:** He says that I probably do. At any rate, we had lined up the redcoats and the Fenians. The Fenians were mostly American residents or citizens who had dressed up in the Fenian costume of the day and had come across the border. They probably had never met Lincoln Alexander and, because they’re from across the border, may not have heard of Lincoln Alexander’s contributions, eloquently described by my colleague Ms. Mossop a few moments ago. But when Linc took the stage, he charmed those Fenians. The Fenians, because they were in costume and in their roles, were a rowdy bunch. You don’t want to mess with the 19th century Fenians. Their legend for creating havoc is well-known. But Linc, with that Lincoln Alexander charm, won them over immediately, and they joined in raucous applause as we commemorated this very important event.

As well, not too long ago, that same band of Niagarans—Mr. Craitor, Mr. Bradley and I—were together to celebrate the Niagara Parks Commission, begun by one of Ontario’s greatest Premiers, Oliver Mowat, over a century ago. And Linc there continued to do excellent work promoting our heritage at that spot.

Lincoln Alexander is absolutely inspiring—that great Canadian immigrant story that we all love to celebrate. He had come over, as Ms. Mossop indicated, from the West Indies as a child. He faced enormous obstacles at the time, incredibly bearing through it; and a list of accomplishments that made him very worthy of winning in 2006 the Greatest Hamiltonian of all time in the Hamilton Spectator contest—Lincoln Alexander prevailing.

In fact, some pretty tough competition: runners up Boris Brott, Arthur Weisz, Thomas McQuesten—Lincoln Alexander, of course, the victor. In politics we know Ellen Fairclough, Sheila Copps, her father Mayor Vic Copps, John Munro among others. So some pretty heavy competition; Lincoln Alexander, of course, prevailed.

I think of the fellow all the time when I get to take that Lincoln Alexander expressway when moving around Stoney Creek and navigating through that part of Hamilton toward the 403; appropriately named after the former Lieutenant Governor, that new highway in the area.

We also, Mr. Speaker, had a recent contest on my website—I don’t know if you joined in. We called it the Great Dominion Dustup. We pitted 64 great Canadian politicians from Confederation to modern times and had people vote online as to who their most inspiring Canadian politician was. Lincoln Alexander squared off against C.D. Howe. C.D. Howe had a major impact after

the war in Canada; a member of Mackenzie King’s government. The C.D. Howe Institute, of course, is named after him. Lincoln Alexander trounced C.D. Howe in that first round. He then ran up against Lester Pearson in the second round. Pearson, of course, made it all the way to the final in our contest before being defeated, believe it or not, by Louis Riel. But Linc held his own against Lester Pearson, an accomplishment in itself as well.

My colleague Laurie Scott, the member for Haliburton—Victoria—Brock, just shared with me that Lincoln Alexander was good friends with her dad, Bill Scott, the long-time MP for the area. Laurie Scott remembers Lincoln Alexander as her Santa Claus. Little Laurie Scott used to sit on Lincoln Alexander’s lap at the Christmas parties where Linc played a jolly Saint Nick. Hopefully Laurie did get the gifts that she desired at that time as a girl in celebrating Christmas—a special memory, no doubt, for my colleague from Haliburton—Victoria—Brock.

His Honour Mr. Alexander’s accomplishments are legion, not only as Lieutenant Governor but as a former cabinet minister in the Joe Clark government, a four-time MP for the Hamilton area, and all kinds of boards, universities and the health care sector he was involved with. I want to say I’m very pleased Lincoln Alexander plays an important role in the charity I also care very much about. He helps with scholarships given to children from low-income families whose parents want to send them to independent or faith-based schools. That’s not always affordable for a lot of families across the province of Ontario. Linc is always there to help celebrate these families whose children have worked hard to enjoy those scholarships.

I’m very pleased to rise in the House today in strong support of Lincoln Alexander Day in our schools. I again congratulate my colleague from Stoney Creek. It’s a pleasure to be part of the debate this morning.

**Ms. DiNovo:** It’s a pleasure to rise and speak to the member for Stoney Creek’s bill to declare Lincoln Alexander Day. This is, of course, exciting, and one of the exciting aspects of it is that it is non-partisan. This man was a Progressive Conservative, he was a cabinet member and he was known for, of course, among other things—I have a wonderful picture of him seen in a screen shot from CBC speaking to the press about the fuddle-duddle incident during the Trudeau era, and I was wondering what he would have to say about the Flick Off campaign if he were here today.

It’s a wonderful and very non-partisan moment when we’re all thrilled to support celebrating an incredible Ontarian. I always wonder as I walk into this place—and if people who are watching this are wondering who Lincoln Alexander was, he was the first black Lieutenant Governor of this province. If you walk down the halls of this Legislature, you’ll see his portrait there, and it is the only face of colour represented on all of the walls. That’s both a great triumph for him and also, in a sense, somewhat of a tragedy that that’s the only face of colour represented. There are portraits all over the walls of this place. They’re all of men, they’re all of white men except



for him and the Queen. Again, I think the fitting homage to this great man is really to work more towards inclusion—inclusion in the political world, inclusion of all sorts.

1120

I wanted to recount a little story, because I know we have schoolchildren here from my own riding, about being a schoolchild about their age. A photographer came by our schoolyard. I was very fair, and my best friend at that time was the only African Canadian girl in our school, Marva Jackson. We played together and the photographer snapped a photo of us, and we became the poster children for Brotherhood Week of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews. We got to have lunch with the then mayor, Nathan Phillips. But what was very strange about that whole experience was that I had never noticed anything particularly different about Marva before that experience. We were just friends. I noticed that all the other girls and all the other boys looked different from me, so I didn't understand what all the fuss was about. It would be wonderful to have that degree of naïveté again, to have that degree of innocence again, that degree of inclusion that many of us experienced when we were children and yet somehow lose as we grow older.

Four hundred years ago was the date of the first African to arrive on the shores of Canada and to become a Canadian. Mathieu Da Costa arrived as a slave. We did have slavery in this country, and we had slavery for quite a long time after that first arrival. In fact, in 1793 the Abolition Act was passed in Upper Canada, now known as Ontario. It was the first act of its kind to declare freedom for slaves in all of the British Empire. So we can be proud of that as Canadians and as Ontarians, but we can be a little saddened by the fact that though we had the law on our side and have had the law on our side for some time, the impact of that law isn't what we would hope it would be.

I was looking at Black History Canada—and I commend Ms. Mossop, who introduced this day during Black History Month. One of the first paragraphs on the website says, "While Canada did not have legal segregation, there were always 'understandings' about"—and they're talking about most of the last century and some of this—"which neighbourhoods black people could live in, or where they could worship. Most professional organizations"—how high they could rise in those organizations, who would and "would not hire them."

We also have to, in commending Lincoln Alexander, look to the future and how we can never have that happen again and educate our children.

I also did a little bit of research and found some wonderful words—I'm going to read some of them—from a study that was commissioned by this Ontario Legislature back a ways, in 1992. I'll tell you who wrote these words in a minute, but when you read these words, we should feel a little sad. The author writes, in the study commissioned:

"The long and the short of it is that when you read the recommendations, it's as if virtually nothing has changed

for visible minority kids in the school system over the last 10 years. I have to admit that it stopped me in my tracks because I know that the Toronto board, of all the boards, has made a Herculean effort to get the schools to be responsive to the startling multiracial and multicultural changes in the community.

"The students were fiercely articulate and often deeply moving. Sometimes angry. They don't understand why the schools are so slow to reflect the broader society. One bright young man in a Metro east high school said that he had reached grade 13 without once having read a book by a black author on the curriculum. And other students, in the large meeting of which he was a part, started to name the books they had been given to read, the titles were *Black Like Me* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*." Those are books I read when I was in school. "It's absurd in a world which has a positive cornucopia of magnificent literature by black writers. I further recall an animated young woman from a high school in Peel, who described her school as overwhelmingly multiracial and then added that she and her fellow students had white teachers, white counsellors, a white principal and were taught black history"—the little bit that they were—"by a white teacher. There wasn't a single non-white member of the staff. And then there was a black participant, who rose shyly from the audience to say that he was a teacher and that his most touching experience came on his first day on the job, when a group of black youngsters approached him, solemnly shook his hand and said, 'Thank goodness. A black teacher at last.'"

Those words were written by Stephen Lewis, a member of this Legislature at the time, in a commissioned study that he completed. They were written in 1992—15 years ago. So I see them as a challenge to us all. He, at that time, proposed a secretariat to look into the issues of race in the province, an anti-racism secretariat to be founded back then. Here we are 15 years later and those words still ring as if they were written today. I think that's what's sad.

Here's what's glad. I had a visit from a wonderful organization called the Black Youth Coalition Against Violence. This is a group that grew out of what we call the summer of the gun in Toronto. They're an incredible group of young activists who really want to make a difference, both in the educational system and in the lives of children and adults of colour. They recognize that what Lewis was speaking about so very long ago—he goes on in that document to talk about how mothers watched their young black sons leave home and didn't know whether they'd arrive home alive at night. I know there are a number of women I've spoken to, even in my own riding, who share that same fear for their children.

This coalition against violence has some wonderful programs, and I want to talk about one of them. This would make Lincoln Alexander so proud, because I know that the best accolade to someone who has accomplished a great deal on their own is to see that their legacy is being upheld and carried forward. One of the programs is called BLING—Bring Love In, Not Guns—which I think



is terrific. They've had a series of dinners in Regent Park and other places.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. DiNovo:** Good, isn't it? They've had a BLING summit harmony dinner. They get 350 to 400 youth out at these dinners and they talk about those issues that are relevant. Again, most of the youth representatives who are going to be here a little later are teenagers or young adults in their 20s.

They wanted me to bring forward what really is a petition, but I wanted to read some of it just to give us a feel for the kind of legacy that I think Lincoln Alexander would love to see perpetuated. Linc was all about and is all about—because he still is. By the way, there's going to be a big celebration on May 17 to honour him. He's now 85 years old, as many of us know. To go back to the Black Youth Coalition Against Violence, I think this kind of sentiment really honours Linc Alexander. They say:

"Whereas the purpose of the provincial educational system is to provide all students with the knowledge, skills and self-respect to become a self-sufficient and productive member of society; and

"Whereas the Ontario curriculum should be a source of valuable, necessary and truthful information about the development of the world and particularly western civilization; and

"Whereas for decades the province of Ontario has ignored the education crisis among black students reflected in a push-out/dropout rate now estimated to be between 40% and 60%; and

"Whereas the dropout/push-out rate among black students can be partly attributed to feelings of inferiority, hopelessness and alienation, as a result of being taught a curriculum that does not reflect any positive contributions of black people to world and western civilization; and

"Whereas by deliberately omitting the profound role that black people have played in the development of world and western civilization, the provincial educational system is fostering a false sense of white superiority and black inferiority amongst its students;

"We, the undersigned, respectfully petition:

"(1) that the Greeks and Romans, widely considered the founders of the arts and sciences and consequently western civilization, were educated"—and here's something interesting for our students—"by black Egyptians who had already developed a highly sophisticated education system centuries earlier;

"(2) North African Muslims called the Moors ruled Spain from 712 to 1492 A.D. and laid the base of knowledge that brought Europe out of the Dark Ages and into the Renaissance; and

"(3) apart from economic exploitation, the motive behind slavery and colonialism was to systemically destroy the black family unit and instil mental conditioning to keep black people divided, envious, hateful and distrustful of one another."

This is written by teenagers, high school students, and they're bringing it forward in terms of what's developing

into a mass movement across the city in response to what we call in Toronto the summer of the gun.

It's one thing to declare a day and to celebrate someone like Lincoln Alexander—and so we should. This is wonderful, and of course as New Democrats we support it. He's an amazing man. It's a non-partisan move; it's a wonderful move. He played such an important role and a role that I think we should uphold not only as Ontarians but as all Canadians, as Ms. Mossop said. After all, we look south most of the time in this country, and one of my personal heroes, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, is celebrated all the time, yet we don't uphold our own Canadian and Ontarian heroes. So this is a chance to do that, and of course we support that.

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But on a more profound, deeper level, the real accolade to Lincoln Alexander would be to make a difference for our children and our youth, which is what he tried to do and tries to do in everything that he does. So I would urge all members of his House, when BYCAV comes here to protest out in the front, to go out and join them, to speak to their leaders—they are the future of this province and of this country—to sign the petition when it comes before the Legislature, when it comes to them individually as MPPs, because it will, because these kids are organized and they're determined, and so they should be; and that we look at our educational system, that we look at the stories we tell to each other, that we look at how we tell the history of our world and that we tell a true history of all of our world, not just some of our world.

Again, it's an honour to support this bill from Ms. Mossop, an honour, of course, to celebrate Lincoln Alexander and an even greater honour to look at the legacy that we might leave in this Legislature in his honour, and that is to look after the futures of black youth.

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** It's my pleasure to speak this morning in support of An Act to proclaim Lincoln Alexander Day. I'd like to congratulate my friend and colleague Jennifer Mossop, the member from Stoney Creek, for bringing this bill forward. She's a strong advocate for her riding and the great city of Hamilton.

As a member of provincial Parliament for Hamilton Mountain, I can think of no greater representative of our fine city than Mr. Alexander. As a former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Mr. Alexander has broken through many barriers in his lifetime. This is a lifetime of firsts. He was a partner in the first interracial law firm in Canada, the first black Canadian elected as a member of Parliament, the first person of colour appointed to federal cabinet and the first black Lieutenant Governor in Canada. Although he is now in his ninth decade, Mr. Alexander is a role model for a new generation of young people.

He has been my role model since the age of 14. That's when I first met Mr. Alexander, when he was campaigning in west Hamilton. He came to a Greek dance. I



was there with my family. That was pretty well my social activities back then, being raised in a very strict manner by a strict family. He was the first person to ask me to dance a tango. He was such a gentleman. He offered his arm. I didn't know what to do. He took my hand, he put it on his arm; so he taught me things, and we went dancing. I'll never forget that moment.

I reminded him of that years, years, years later when I was first elected. He always says to me, "You're my favourite minister," and I say, "I bet you say that to all the ministers." And he says, "Yes, I do." So he's right to the point. The other thing he always says is, "When are you going to give me more money? When are you politicians going to give me more money?" As the member from Stoney Creek said, he's always to the point. Seriously, I can't think of a more important or a more accomplished or a sweeter Hamiltonian.

During his term as Lieutenant Governor for Ontario, he made youth and education issues key parts of his mandate, speaking to students at over 250 schools. He consistently and constantly promotes the importance of education. Mr. Alexander's commitment to young people was recognized by the Ontario government in 1993 when they established the Lincoln M. Alexander Award. The award recognizes young people who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in eliminating racial discrimination. Each year, three young people between the ages of 16 and 25 receive an award of \$5,000 each and a framed scroll.

At age 70, Alexander was named a Companion of the Order of Canada. The citation at his induction provides a very good summary of his life:

"Motivated by his continuing concern for social justice, he has led an exemplary life as a lawyer, politician and Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

"Known for his good judgment, tolerance, compassion and humanity, he has served the citizens of Ontario well, striving to instill these values in young people and working tirelessly for improved race relations."

Mr. Alexander has been a visionary and a role model for the people of Ontario for over half a century. This act is a wonderful opportunity to ensure that his hard work, his unmatched contribution to our province and the mentorship he has provided for countless youth in our province are acknowledged. I am proud to stand in support of this bill which would make the third Wednesday in February each year Lincoln Alexander Day.

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):** I am very pleased to join in the debate today. I have looked at Bill 220, which deals with proclaiming Lincoln Alexander Day in Ontario public schools. I noticed in the preamble, though, it didn't mention that the Honourable Lincoln MacCauley Alexander was elected in 1968 and re-elected right on until 1980 as a Progressive Conservative MP. Why that's important is because I was going to McMaster University at the time. In 1970, I did my honours BA and then my MBA.

**Mr. Hudak:** How long was your hair?

**Mr. Tascona:** It was always short. I'm an Italian; I can't grow it too long. You've got to look good.

During those times, I got to know that Lincoln Alexander was my MP for Hamilton West, which is where the McMaster campus is, and for the period of time that I was at that school, he was there for at least three terms.

It's not surprising that Lincoln Alexander had an outstanding career as a politician, but also I think as a humanitarian. When you look at his CV, it really is outstanding. I had the privilege of sitting with him at the 50th annual Commonwealth parliamentary conference, which first started in Quebec City, and then we moved it to Toronto when Speaker Curling was in charge at the Legislature. So we were together, and it was quite a good evening in terms of talking with him and discussing, not politics, but things that are important in the parliamentary system, because we were dealing with all the Commonwealth countries, whether they are in Africa, or whether England or Australia. It was a good evening, and I remember that, especially since he was the member when I was at university.

When you look at his record in humanitarian work—it's something that I have looked at. I think it's important. I think most members here think it's important in terms of the work that they do in their constituencies.

When I was going to McMaster, that was when the hospital was built. We were very proud of that hospital in terms of the money that went into it and having it on campus. It was a state-of-the-art facility, also a facility where a good friend of mine whom I went to school with, Dr. Peter Leggett, got his training. He is a doctor in Hamilton now. You could go there, and you didn't necessarily have to come from a specific area. He came out of kinesiology in the phys-ed program at McMaster. They were looking for people with a broader perspective on what it would be to be a doctor in terms of caring for people. That's what I think was outstanding about the facility at McMaster. But it took politicians such as Lincoln Alexander and other strong politicians in the Hamilton area to make that happen.

I think it's something that's important, because of the work that I do with respect to the Royal Victoria Hospital, and bringing a new hospital there in 1997 after there hadn't been a hospital there since—I believe it was built 50 years prior to that. To have a new hospital in your community, a state-of-the-art facility, is something that's very important. That hospital at McMaster has only grown in terms of its importance and significance to the area, just like RVH has in terms of the expansion that we're looking at in the next year or two—a 101-bed expansion—along with the cancer care centre that we've done a lot of work at in terms of bringing forth, not only the cancer care centre but working with Hospice Simcoe and bringing forth the first mobile cancer radiation unit, which will be coming to RVH this fall.

It's important for our area, because Hamilton has a number of hospitals. St. Joseph's is another one that I recount, because that was the hospital we used to go to before they had the one on campus. So you need those health care services in your area. I think Lincoln Alexander epitomized that. There are also the social



services that you need in an area. I remember Hamilton was the first family law court in the province. That would have been during the time, in the 1980s, that Lincoln Alexander was the chair of the Workers' Compensation Board of Ontario, and there is no doubt that he had some clout with respect to making those types of things happen within the community.

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We talk about Canadian heroes. This is an Ontario hero, and certainly closer to home in Hamilton. The work that he has done to make sure that—you know, he's 85 and he is still out there. He's still out there doing public work. I think that's something we should remember as politicians and people who represent their communities: that when we leave here, it's not something we should stop doing, in terms of representing and bringing the best to our community. So it's important that we recognize someone who not only—I know Tim Hudak would share with me that he was a very well respected Progressive Conservative MP, who served as Minister of Labour in the Joe Clark government. Certainly that was his foundation: Progressive Conservative values. It followed through in terms of what he felt was important for his community.

It's obvious, when I was going to school in McMaster in Hamilton West—it's a very diverse community. The fact that he represented that area as a Progressive Conservative, and the fact that he chose the Progressive Conservative Party to enter politics, and was there for over 10 years, I think says a lot with respect to what he thought was important not only for himself but as we go on. I think that epitomizes the type of work that is important to any member.

This week I met with GO Transit officials, as we're having GO Transit move into our area this fall. That's something Hamilton has had for many years. But the meeting I had with the GO Transit officials this week was very positive in terms of bringing that to Barrie, when it was cut out back in 1992. We have that link, and we can link right now all the way over to Hamilton. I think that's important.

Just in passing as I close here, I do have this Saturday, May 12, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., an environmental project. It's at Lovers Creek and Chalmers Park, where we're going to be planting trees as an environmental project to enhance the environment in the city of Barrie. I welcome all my constituents to join me this Saturday from 10 to 1 at Chalmers Park.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York):** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm just checking—yes, two minutes. I was told they saved me two minutes. Sorry, I had to be outside the Legislature for a few minutes.

I've come back just to speak about Lincoln Alexander. I'm sure everyone has talked about his many accomplishments, so I'm going to leave that for the record. I share in those many accomplishments over the years.

I'd like to talk about Lincoln Alexander the man: the man I have come to know, the man who, when I come into a room, always remembers my name—and he must know far more people than me. The man, when I was

first elected as a councillor and had the opportunity to meet him, was very gregarious, very charming, very honourable. In my time as a mayor when I met him, he continued to remember those. He always was there to speak, and to speak so honestly and forthrightly. He was always there in a very charming capacity with a wonderful, wonderful sense of humour. I remember meeting with him and talking about issues, and even though some of the issues were very dear to his heart and he felt very passionately about the causes against racism and the proposals he was making to try to help black youth in trouble—he felt very strongly about them, but he always, when he spoke, did so with compassion and understanding. He never did it with rancour or bitterness, he never got angry with those who opposed his point of view, and he was and is a true gentleman in every sense of the word.

The last time I saw him, or the last time I remember having a lengthy conversation with him, was at an event in the dining room here in the Legislature. It was one of those evening events that politicians like to go to. I remember some of the speakers standing up, and sitting beside him as he commented wryly on the merits or demerits of what they had to say. But he did so in such a jovial way that the people sitting around him enjoyed—even more than listening to the politicians talk about subjects, they listened to Lincoln Alexander's running commentary of those same politicians. I look fondly on all of my experiences with him over the years. I understand it to be his 85th birthday either now or in a few days, and all we can all do is wish him a long life and many more happy memories to him that he has brought to us.

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot):** It gives me great pleasure to rise to compliment my colleague from Stoney Creek as well as to talk about my good friend His Honour Lincoln Alexander.

I have been very privileged in life to meet some great Canadians. I have been close friends with people, from Lois Wilson, to John Diefenbaker, to Tommy Douglas—of course, Paul Martin; I've met Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Terry Fox. But I want to tell you, as a great, great Hamiltonian, there's Lincoln Alexander, whom I'm fortunate to call a friend.

I first met Lincoln, like Mr. Hudak's colleague, as a student at McMaster. He was my MP as well, as it turns out. I recall in 1972 attending a debate, and it was a very hot day. There was a huge crowd of students, several hundred students, and the NDP candidate of the day, Peggy Leppert, took ill. She fainted while speaking, only to be scooped up into the arms of the giant Lincoln and literally carried from the room to have her brow mopped down by His Honour, who then escorted her back in so she could finish the debate. It was one of those moments I'll never forget.

Later I had a chance encounter with Linc that sort of sealed our friendship. We both, as it turns out, ended up being featured speakers at an annual meeting of the Alzheimer Society of Canada. His beloved Yvonne was



stricken with the illness, as was my late mother. We had that in common and we did some work together raising funds for that very wonderful group. He continues, as I do, to have an interest in eradicating that disease.

Later I had a chance to work quite closely with Lincoln, when he was made a patron of the Burlington Teen Tour Band. A couple of my staff people have a long history with the teen tour band, so we're quite involved at the McMeekin constituency office in affirming these young folk.

I can remember one particular incident. I don't want to talk about all the honorary degrees and stuff; that's all been covered. I want to talk about the man. I remember at one concert the teen tour band was doing, Lincoln was invited to speak, and he spoke to those of us in the audience as leaders of today and of himself as a leader of yesterday. He said, "Look, the leaders of yesterday and the leaders of today ought to get their chequebooks out and write cheques for these kids. While you're writing the cheque—forgive my back—I'm going to talk to these young folk," and he did exactly that. For the next seven minutes on stage he turned and spoke intimately; walked around having intimate conversations, with these young people. One of these kids said to me, "You know, he instantly went from old fart to icon." I thought that was kind of an interesting way of putting it.

I remember being at a fundraising banquet for the teen tour band later and, given that I was a friend of Lincoln's, I was given the task of getting him out of the kitchen. He insisted on walking around and affirming everybody, all the volunteers who were working in the kitchen, and we were about 20 minutes late getting started because we had to get Linc back in the room.

Sir William Hughes, the musical director of the teen tour band, speaks very, very highly of him. I recall something he said recently: "Public morality really relies on private character," and that is Lincoln Alexander, who himself has always exemplified that public service is not an option, it's an obligation.

Lincoln Alexander, my friend, our friend, friend of young people across Ontario, is a very deserving person in terms of this honour, and I look forward to supporting this bill.

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**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** I'm absolutely delighted and honoured to rise to speak in support of the proposed Lincoln Alexander Day Act, 2007. If ever there was a man in Ontario who is deserving of such an honour, it would be the Honourable Lincoln Alexander, or, as we affectionately call him in Hamilton, simply "Linc."

It has been said that it's not where a person ends up but rather how far they come that defines their strength of character. As you have heard, Lincoln Alexander's journey is a testament to his tenacity, his persistence, his integrity, coupled with a huge capability and competency, and supported by an undeterred belief in the improvements of the elements which will contribute to a better life for Ontarians.

Linc represented the federal riding of Hamilton West, and it's with great pride for Hamilton West that we celebrate his achievements today. It's widely known that Lincoln's contributions to Hamilton are legendary. His accomplishments are amazing. And his continued involvement in support of culture, arts and education is an inspiration to everyone.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to tell you a little bit about the human element of this giant of a man, who casts a tall shadow in stature and in leadership. I'm going to share some personal experiences. I was attending a local event many years ago and was very intimidated to go over and introduce myself to this honoured and celebrated public figure. I gathered my courage, I walked over to him, I extended my hand, introducing myself, and with a booming voice he said, "I know you. Keep up your good work." I was astounded. He was referring to my community work and my business. And when Linc speaks, his eyes twinkle with a kindness he projects.

A few years later, when our paths crossed again, he walked up to me, clearly this time with a purpose. He had heard I was thinking of embarking on a new career in politics and wanted to offer me advice and encouragement, as only Linc can do, with an earnest interest in Hamilton, sharing his reflections and his knowledge. Over the years we have attended countless events as guests and enjoyed chatter and laughter and shared some very interesting and similar experiences.

I have never had the benefit of listening to Linc address the House of Commons, but I did get a glimpse of his powerful ability as an orator at a very moving event in Hamilton last year called Perlasca. He was a guest speaker, along with the Israeli and Italian Consuls General and Rabbi Emeritus Bernard Baskin. Lincoln spoke with passion and authority, holding every guest in Hamilton Place emotionally entranced.

Linc embodies the experience of Ontario through his life works, and I offer three observations. He's demonstrated courage to not see barriers as a block to his progress, but rather as opportunities to change the lives of the people in Ontario for the better, to change them through his presence, through his commitment, through his hard work and through his dedication. Secondly, he offered hope to those whose ambitions were previously limited by race, education or circumstance. Third, he encouraged others to follow their dreams, not to give up and not to give in but to proceed against all odds.

I stand before you as someone who's been encouraged by the Honourable Lincoln Alexander. I am indeed thankful for his friendship, for his personal words of wisdom and for his support. Lincoln Alexander recounts his remarkable life in his memoir entitled *Go to School, You're a Little Black Boy*, of which I am very privileged to own a signed copy.

Last year Linc was named Hamilton's most distinguished citizen. Clearly, the citizens of Hamilton value Linc's contributions and his fortitude. We in this Legislature also value the immense contributions of the Honourable Lincoln Alexander. I support this motion

with great intensity and thanks to a man for whom I hold great respect, and whom I consider a personal friend.

Linc, to you from Hamilton West, we say, "Thanks, and keep up the good work."

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington):** I too am delighted to rise to speak in support of Ms. Mossop's motion to create Lincoln Alexander Day in Ontario schools.

My Hamilton-area colleagues have spoken about their personal connections with Lincoln Alexander, but there's also a Guelph connection: Linc has been the chancellor of the University of Guelph for a number of years. In fact, the university community has kept on insisting that he be reappointed. Many of you will know that, in most cases, being chancellor is sort of a ceremonial role. In Linc's case, it's an emotional role, where he seems to have managed to connect with the entire campus. As students come up and cross the platform at convocation, it's quite fascinating to be sitting there beside Linc, because as he takes each person's hand and they kneel before him to receive their hood and accept their degree, Linc has a personal word for each student. In fact, if it's a young woman, he tends to check out the hand to see if they're wearing an engagement ring, and in those few seconds that it takes to go by and be granted their degree, he has usually checked out their wedding plans and their future plans for life. With the young gentlemen, he can't check out the wedding plans, but he does check out what it is that they're planning to do next.

I know that when my own daughter graduated, he grabbed her hand and said, "Your grandmother is down there with a camera. Turn around and smile," and wouldn't let her go until she'd done what she was told and smiled for her grandmother.

So he has just been amazing at connecting with people all over the province on an individual basis.

I want to go back to the autobiography *Go to School, You're a Little Black Boy*. This was co-authored with Guelph author Herb Shoveller. The publisher was apparently very concerned that people would be offended by the title, but Linc insisted that he wanted to quote his mother in the title because he thought that captured the value of education for children.

This is a wonderful motion; I support it.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Ms. Mossop, you have up to two minutes to respond.

**Ms. Mossop:** I want to thank the members for Erie–Lincoln, Parkdale–High Park, Hamilton Mountain, Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot, Hamilton West and Guelph–Wellington for taking part in this debate/storytelling.

The bill is aimed, as I said, at schools and at students, so it is worth noting that there are three schools called Lincoln Alexander Public School, as well as Lincoln M. Alexander Secondary School. In 1993, the government of Ontario created the Lincoln M. Alexander Award to reward young Ontarians who have demonstrated exemplary leadership in the elimination of racial discrimination.

We have come a very long way since Depression-era white Canada, but racial discrimination and hatred, often based in fear, often based in ignorance and smallness, is still rife in our world, and it thrives in dark and foolish hearts. I don't know if there is a cure for it, but in Linc, we can take a cue. Many might have called him a fool for not lashing out at those who unfairly discriminated against him. They might have called him a fool for not lashing out with violence and with destruction. But Linc is no fool. He fought with an open and a generous heart, and he won. Oh, how he won. It is in his CV, it is in his eyes, it is in that deep, varied, rich heart of his that he met the world with and in that deep, rich, varied voice that so engaged me initially and that will resonate for many, many, many generations to come.

We have so much to thank Linc for. He has given us so much, and this is a small way of saying, "Thank you, Linc."

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

## PRESCRIPTION MONITORING ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 SUR LA SURVEILLANCE PHARMACEUTIQUE

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** We shall deal first with ballot item number 6, standing in the name of Mr. Ramal.

Mr. Ramal has moved second reading of Bill 108. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe):** Can I move my bill to the standing committee on social policy?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Ramal has asked that the bill be referred to the standing commission on social policy. Agreed? Agreed.

## LINCOLN ALEXANDER DAY ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 SUR LE JOUR DE LINCOLN ALEXANDER

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** We shall now deal with ballot item number 7, standing in the name of Ms. Mossop.

Ms. Mossop has moved second reading of Bill 220. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Carried.

**Ms. Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek):** I'd ask that the bill be referred to the standing committee on regulations and private bills, please.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Ms. Mossop has asked that the bill be referred to the standing committee on regulations and private bills. Agreed? Agreed.

What a pleasure it has been chairing this meeting this morning of private members' business.



Since all matters relating to private members' business have been dealt with, I do now leave the chair. The House will resume at 1:30 of the clock.

*The House recessed from 1200 to 1330.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### NURSES

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** Today, during Nursing Week, it is a great pleasure that I rise on behalf our leader, John Tory, and the members of my party to pay tribute and celebrate the contribution of nurses to excellence in patient care and service. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the many contributions of nurses in their varied roles as direct care providers, educators, administrators, researchers and policy experts. It is an opportunity to thank them for serving with a compassionate and caring heart.

Yes, our nurses are very much the heart of our health system. It is their compassion, their dedication, their knowledge, their skills and their patient-centred approach that make them such a vital part of our health system. It is their commitment to always putting the patient first that has allowed them to make such a positive difference in the lives of so many Ontarians on a daily basis. It is their commitment to putting the patient first that has enabled them to work with governments of all stripes to develop policies to not only contribute to furthering the excellence in health care, but also to building a very strong nursing profession.

During our time in office, we were proud to work with them to position nurses to influence the policy and decision-making of government. We supported the advanced practice roles and we made investments. We championed educational reform and invested in research.

Congratulations to all nurses.

### UNIVERSITY RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington):** Recently, I was proud to announce that the McGuinty government is supporting three research projects at the University of Guelph totalling \$8.66 million.

This investment is part of the Ontario research fund's research infrastructure program, which helps researchers obtain the lab space, equipment and computer software they need to stay on the forefront of innovation. To succeed in the changing economy we need to develop new ideas and turn these ideas into exciting products and services that we can market to the world.

Six hundred and sixty-six thousand dollars go to Dr. Paul Garrett, who will use an innovative new array of neutron detectors—the most advanced in the world—to conduct research at the frontiers of nuclear physics.

Dr. Jacek Lipowski received \$2.8 million. His team from U of G's Centre for Food and Soft Materials Science conduct collaborative biomaterials research among physicists, chemists and biologists.

Dr. Stefan Kycia's research team will receive \$5.2 million to create the new Brockhouse X-ray Diffraction and Scattering Sector as part of a national program of new materials discovery.

This funding will leverage investments from 14 other industrial and academic partners, for a total spending of \$36.6 million.

On a personal note, my father was chair of the physics department and the first dean of physical science. I'm proud of U of G physicists.

### SIGN LANGUAGE IN SCHOOLS

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** I am pleased to rise in the House today to draw your attention to the issues surrounding the education of those who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

On February 28 of this year, I had the opportunity to attend a community forum on deaf education, hosted by the Ontario Association of the Deaf. There were over 450 concerned parents and members of the deaf community who attended this event, including representatives from my riding of Haliburton–Victoria–Brock. They were passionately pleading with the McGuinty government to listen to their concerns.

This Friday, May 11, at 9 a.m., the Ontario Association of the Deaf is holding a rally here at Queen's Park to show support for deaf children's rights to American Sign Language education in Ontario.

The deaf community has stressed that the lack of adequate American Sign Language instruction in our schools is a primary concern among parents of deaf children. The association has stated that the creation of minimum standards for the use of sign language in our schools is a necessary step to ensure that deaf students are receiving an adequate education.

We all know that access to quality education is the key to a positive, productive future for these students and all students in Ontario.

The Ontario Association of the Deaf is calling on the Ministry of Education to create minimum standards for the sign language instruction. OAD stresses the need for this government to recognize that some students don't succeed in spoken language programs and a transition policy needs to be put in place for those students so they will have access to adequate sign language instruction. Let's ensure that all those who are deaf, deafened and hard of hearing have the adequate education to allow them to reach their full potential.

### CHATHAM–KENT

**Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham–Kent Essex):** In a recent survey titled North American Cities of the Future—Foreign Direct Investment, the business magazine for the

Financial Times of London, UK—it had cities in the United States, Canada and Mexico compete directly against each other.

Chatham–Kent placed ninth in the small cities of the future category in all of North America, fourth in Canada. It also ranked second as the most cost-effective in North America and first in Canada. The magazine considers a small city to have a population of 100,000 to 500,000. Chatham–Kent is barely over 100,000, yet they were able to compete with the entire of North America.

The judging criteria included economic potential, cost effectiveness, human resources, quality of life, infrastructure and business friendliness. Chatham–Kent's proximity to the United States makes it an ideal choice for industry. Automotive and other manufacturing companies also benefit from the easy access to major US markets within one hour's drive. Highway 401 is the main transport trade corridor throughout Chatham–Kent. They also offer the benefits of a highly skilled and motivated labour force.

Chatham–Kent has some of the best farmland in the province. As a lifelong resident of Merlin, and a farmer, I can attest to its diversity and agricultural richness. I can honestly say that if we can't produce it here, it doesn't grow in Canada. Our farmers are among the most productive and versatile in the world. Congratulations to all the people of Chatham–Kent.

#### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey):** Has the Liberal Party not learned anything from Adscam? In the wake of the sponsorship scandal, where millions of dollars were shovelled out the door to groups with strong Liberal ties, Dalton McGuinty seems to be doing it all over again with his year-end political slush fund. It's Adscam number two. As Debra Kelly from the Newmarket–Aurora Era-Banner wrote:

“For several weeks, the opposition has been demanding to know how groups with close Liberal ties received hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars without documentation, oversight or any kind of accountability.

“In Richmond Hill, for instance, \$200,000 was given to the Iranian-Canadian Cultural Centre, which was registered as an animal welfare group, with all seven of its board members having made donations to the Liberal Party.

“In all, \$32 million went to 110 groups in the past two years, with not so much as an application form.

“Just as Treasury Board President Reg Alcock then pooh-poohed \$12 million in Adscam dollars, Finance Minister Greg Sorbara called \$200,000 ‘a pittance’ in slush dollars.

“There it is, just like 2004, that absolute and utter disregard for taxpayers.

“As it was on Parliament Hill, fiscal responsibility, democratic accountability and ethical behaviour matter very little at Mr. McGuinty's Queen's Park.”

Yes, it's Adscam all over again. As the Globe and Mail wrote this week, “Laughter is a fitting response to the absurd tales the Ontario government is telling about the \$32 million it gave away to groups, some with Liberal connections.”

It's Adscam number two, all over again.

#### MILL CLOSURE

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** Yet again, there's bad news in northern Ontario. Today I rise, unfortunately, to talk about another mill that's closing indefinitely in northern Ontario. Today, 150 workers at the Northern Hardwood mills in Thunder Bay are going down indefinitely. For Thunder Bay, that means that two sawmills are slated to close, on top of two paper mills and one containerboard mill that have already closed.

Thunder Bay has received a huge blow, yet this government seems to think that everything is fine. They go around content with themselves as if everything is fine, that they're doing a great job. But for the workers in Thunder Bay and across northern Ontario, the story is the same. On the outskirts of Thunder Bay, you have the sawmill in Dorion that's closing. The Red Rock Norampac mill is closed. To the east of Thunder Bay, the Bowater Ignace sawmill shut its doors as a direct result of your softwood lumber agreement, and that was just but a short time ago. The woodlands workers at Ignace have seen layoffs recently. Now, the entire woodlands operation at Ignace is at risk of closing down indefinitely. For Ignace, a town with a population of little more than 1,000 people, that is a huge, devastating blow, as it was for the people of Chapleau, the people of Smooth Rock Falls, the people of Opasatika—and the list goes on.

1340

That blow dealt to Thunder Bay, Ignace, Red Rock and communities across the north, including, as I said, Smooth Rock Falls and Opasatika—it's a huge blow. Your energy policies have led to this, and this government's inaction will be well remembered in the next election when people have a—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

#### McMASTER UNIVERSITY

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot):** I take great pleasure in making frequent visits to my alma mater, McMaster University. McMaster is not only one of Canada's premier research institutions, it's also a source of great local pride.

It's clear from listening to McMaster students that we have turned a new page on the divisive bitterness of past governments. Students understand that our government's priorities are different and include major reinvestments in education and far more money by way of direct student support.

Our \$6.2-billion Reaching Higher plan is ensuring that 80,000 more students receive grant support, three times the 2003 level; 86,000 new post-secondary spaces have



been created; and 145,000 more low- and middle-income students are receiving enhanced student aid. There's \$300 million more for student aid, \$220 million more in support of graduate education, and \$275 million more for much-needed facility improvement and research. Clearly, our government is getting things done.

We're making good progress with our investments in education because we've invested so much time actually listening to students and responding to their needs. Through research and innovation and strategic educational investments, we are responding to the challenges of the global economy. Ontario is helping our students to achieve their goals and, in so doing, is ensuring that Ontario can be its very best.

### NURSES

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** I rise in the House today to talk about the great things that are happening for Ontario's nurses, some of which are happening even in the riding of Leeds–Grenville, since the member for that riding doesn't seem to want to recognize the great progress being made by the McGuinty government.

We know that our honourable Minister of Health has said that our nurses are the heart of our health care system. As a result, we're working with them to address their needs and improve their supports. I should remind the member for Leeds–Grenville that Brockville General will benefit from eight nursing grads thanks to the McGuinty government's nursing grad guarantee.

Let's think back to what life was like for nurses under the sad record of the Tories. Between 1995 and 1998, there were 8,000 fewer nurses working in Ontario hospitals. The former Tory leader even referred to our nurses as hula hoops. After the Conservatives failed to address the nurse shortage in our province, we listened to what nurses said they wanted, and that is one of the reasons why we're creating 8,000 new nursing positions.

We know there is more work to do, but we assure our nurses that the Conservative days of underappreciation and underfunding are over. The people of Ontario are too smart. They have no intention of returning to those days. The McGuinty government is making progress with the continued input from our valued nursing professionals. We will keep moving forward for the betterment of our Ontario nurses and the betterment of the people of Ontario.

### ELECTORAL REFORM

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I rise in the House today to talk about what the McGuinty government is doing to modernize our electoral process and how that would help to enhance the integrity and security of Ontario's electoral system.

By putting party names on the ballot, we can help voters to make more informed decisions. We're also making it easier to vote by extending polling hours by an

extra hour, and we have more than doubled the number of advanced poll days, from six to 13, during regularly scheduled elections.

We value the input of Ontarians, which is why we created the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. We also know it is important for our voters to be knowledgeable on the issues of electoral reform, which is why we are giving the Chief Election Officer the responsibility to deliver a neutral public education campaign.

We're excited to move forward with the reforms as we head into October's election, and we're also looking forward to working with Ontarians to identify and implement their suggestions and their needs.

We know we need to continue to evolve to meet the needs of Ontarians and we are committed to doing so now and into the future.

### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on general government and move its adoption.

**The Acting Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 184, An Act to protect species at risk and to make related changes to other Acts / *Projet de loi 184, Loi visant à protéger les espèces en péril et à apporter des modifications connexes à d'autres lois.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

**Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham–Kent Essex):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on finance and economic affairs and move its adoption.

**The Acting Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 203, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Remedies for Organized Crime and Other Unlawful Activities Act, 2001 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 203, Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi de 2001 sur les recours pour crime organisé et autres activités illégales et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

1350

NO MORE FINANCING TIERS  
IN EDUCATION ACT, 2007LOI DE 2007 ÉLIMINANT LES PALIERS  
DE FINANCEMENT EN ÉDUCATION

Mr. Marchese moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 222, An Act to amend the Education Act with respect to fundraising / Projet de loi 222, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation en ce qui a trait aux activités de financement.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** The bill adds a section to the Education Act respecting fundraising by school councils. The section provides that school councils may raise funds in accordance with applicable policies established by the board and for purposes approved by the board or authorized by board policies. A school council shall ensure that any funds raised by it or by any other person or entity are not used for expenditures on the operating costs or capital undertakings of a school.

## MOTIONS

## CONSIDERATION OF BILL 165

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding discharging a bill from third reading back to committee.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has asked for unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding discharging a bill from third reading back to committee. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I move that the order for third reading of Bill 165, An Act to establish and provide for the office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, be discharged and the bill be referred to the standing committee on justice policy; and

That, in addition to its regularly scheduled meeting times, the standing committee on justice policy be authorized to meet Monday, May 14, 2007, between 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 165, An Act to establish and provide for the office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

## OTTAWA SENATORS

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Last night during debate I received unanimous consent to allow members to wear the Ottawa Senators pin. We distributed one to each person's desk, and I believe they're in your desks.

We wish the Ottawa Senators the very best in their first game against the Buffalo Sabres tonight. We know they're going to do great. They're going to bring us to the Stanley Cup championship.

## VISITORS

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like all members to welcome a very special class from the separate school Archbishop Romero and their teacher Marlene Reeve-Newson. Welcome.

## OTTAWA SENATORS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Would you clarify for us whether or not it's compulsory to wear these pins? I can clearly indicate to the House that I will not be wearing the pin that the member for Ottawa is wearing.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** On a point of order, Speaker: I'd just like to say that Mike Fisher, a Peterborough native, is one of the stars with the Ottawa Senators, and all my friends in Peterborough will be cheering for Mike tonight.

## DEFERRED VOTES

BUDGET MEASURES AND INTERIM  
APPROPRIATION ACT, 2007LOI DE 2007 SUR LES MESURES  
BUDGÉTAIRES ET L'AFFECTATION  
ANTICIPÉE DE CRÉDITS

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 187, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters / Projet de loi 187, Loi concernant les mesures budgétaires, l'affectation anticipée de crédits et d'autres questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1352 to 1402.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.



**Ayes**

Arthurs, Wayne  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Bentley, Christopher  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bountrogianni, Marie  
Bradley, James J.  
Brotten, Laurel C.  
Bryant, Michael  
Caplan, David  
Chan, Michael  
Colle, Mike  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Duguid, Brad  
Duncan, Dwight  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel

Fonseca, Peter  
Gerretsen, John  
Hoy, Pat  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Kular, Kuldip  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Levac, Dave  
Marsales, Judy  
McGuinty, Dalton  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Patten, Richard

Peters, Steve  
Phillips, Gerry  
Pupatello, Sandra  
Racco, Mario G.  
Ramal, Khalil  
Ramsay, David  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Sergio, Mario  
Smitherman, George  
Sorbara, Gregory S.  
Takhar, Harinder S.  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Wilkinson, John  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Zimmer, David

**The Speaker:** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**Nays**

Arnott, Ted  
Chudleigh, Ted  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Elliott, Christine  
Ferreira, Paul  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Hudak, Tim  
Kormos, Peter

MacLeod, Lisa  
Marchese, Rosario  
Martel, Shelley  
Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Prue, Michael  
Runciman, Robert W.

Savoline, Joyce  
Scott, Laurie  
Tabuns, Peter  
Tascona, Joseph N.  
Tory, John  
Wilson, Jim  
Witmer, Elizabeth

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 54; the nays are 23.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

**VISITORS**

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** We have with us in the Speaker's gallery a delegation from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, here on a study visit with the Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project. The delegation includes members of the National Assembly, the Senate and the provincial assemblies of Pakistan. Please join me in warmly welcoming our guests.

**ORAL QUESTIONS****MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP  
AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS**

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier, and it concerns matters concerning the political slush fund. When I first met the Premier, I was in private life and he was the Leader of the Opposition. He said to me on a number of occasions what an honour it was to serve in this place, and he was right.

Several times in the past two weeks, he has said things that quite directly implied that PC and NDP members of the Legislature who questioned the granting of taxpayers'

money to various groups might be motivated by racism. What the Premier has never said—and I'm asking him through you, Mr. Speaker, to stand in his place as Premier and as a colleague and say it now—is this: "I do not believe any member of this House from any party on any side is racist, nor do I believe their questions in this House are at any time motivated by racism." Will the Premier stand in his place and say that?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I agree entirely with the statement just made by the leader of the official opposition.

I want to advise the House, the leader of the official opposition and the members of the NDP that I have just sent a letter to the Auditor General of Ontario. I have asked him—I'll provide copies of the letter immediately—and I'll quote in part, "I request that you undertake a special assignment under section 17 of the Auditor General Act to review the grant decision-making processes with respect to the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration strategic year-end investments for the fiscal periods 2005-06 and 2006-07." I close with, "Be assured of our full co-operation with you to expedite this important review. Please advise that you will respond to this request and report by the beginning of July."

**Interjections.**

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. Supplementary?

**Mr. Tory:** I want to begin by commending the Premier in particular for agreeing with the statement I made concerning the members of this House on all sides. I want to commend the Premier as well—albeit I think it's happening later than it should—for this matter being referred to the Auditor General.

I would like to ask this question: In light of the fact that there have been substantial questions raised with respect to the propriety of what has happened with this taxpayers' money, in light of the fact that you have now seen fit to refer this matter to the Auditor General for investigation—I agree with what you've done in that instance—I want to ask you whether you think it is appropriate at this time as well to ask the responsible minister to step aside pending the conclusion of this review by the Auditor General, with the hope that we all have in all instances when ministers step aside, that he will be found to be able to return to the cabinet at the appropriate time. Will you ask him to step aside?

1410

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I am not prepared to do that. Clearly, what we are doing now is inviting the Auditor General to take a look at what has in fact happened, to provide his very best advice with respect to the best ways for us as a government—or any government, for that matter—to demonstrate our commitment and support to immigration services. I have had the opportunity to work very closely with Minister Colle. He is exceptional in terms of his work ethic, his dedication, his determination, his motivation, and he has my continuing confidence.

**Mr. Tory:** I haven't been here in this House very long, but the issue, when it comes to a minister stepping



aside during a matter that's being investigated, doesn't have to do with whether one has faith in the character of the minister in particular; it has to do with the question of ministerial accountability. When there is any doubt cast on a minister at all, or on his ministry under his watch, it is the proper thing to do for that minister to step aside, not on the assumption that there's any finding of guilt, but on the assumption that it's better for the minister to step aside and have someone else administer the ministry during the time of that investigation.

You yourself called on many ministers, at the time of your being in this job as Leader of the Opposition, to step aside, and indeed it happened many times. I wonder, notwithstanding the confidence that you have in the minister as a person, whether you might reconsider and think that it is appropriate in the circumstances—especially given that the review you've asked for will hopefully be done expeditiously, by July—for the minister to step aside so the ministry can be run without doubt during that period of time.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, we have invited the Auditor General to take a look at this matter and provide his best advice. I know that the leader of the official opposition would not be suggesting that when—the Minister of Energy did the same thing: He asked for a special audit to review our government's management of the Bruce nuclear refurbishment. I don't think it would have been appropriate for the Minister of Energy to step aside pending the outcome of that review, just as I don't think it's appropriate pending the outcome of this review. The minister continues to have my complete confidence.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Tory:** My question again is of the Premier and on the same matter. I think that there's quite a distinction between an instance in which the Auditor General is being asked to review a commercial transaction being entered into on behalf of the people of Ontario and an instance like this, where we're examining the allocation of taxpayers' money, but with the suggestion made, in a number of instances, that there may have been, for example, ties to the Liberal Party, ties to the minister's office; that really is at the focus or at the centre of the very investigation that you have just asked for—quite properly so—today.

I think, given that this is the nature of some of the factors that led you to ask for this investigation today, it is also a reason why the minister might, most properly, step aside until this investigation is completed, so that the ministry can operate without any thought that there's any cloud over him or over the ministry or over anybody else while the investigation is taking place. I'd be quite happy to see him come back if the Auditor General submits a report that says everything is squeaky clean. Will you consider having the minister step aside?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I disagree with the honourable member. He may choose to continue to put these questions to me, but I've given it some considerable thought. Based on my knowledge of the minister—we had another conversation with him a few moments ago, and he

reinforced for me that his sentiment when he first earned the privilege of serving as the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration was that he felt there was so much work to be done and that he was determined to do as much as he could, in the best way that he could. Minister Colle is chock full of integrity and commitment and he has a solid work ethic. I think he has performed admirably under some very trying and difficult circumstances. He continues to have my confidence. I think what is now incumbent upon all of us, as members of the Legislature, is to allow the Auditor General to do his work.

**Mr. Tory:** I think the Premier mistakes the import of my question as being something that's personal regarding the minister. It's about the issue of broader ministerial accountability and the issue of people being able to look at a process—which you have just, quite properly, commenced today—to ask the Auditor General to look into this in a very short period of time, and the confidence the public has to have that those who are even working with him in the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, the staff and others, will be people that the public will know don't have any particular vested interest in what's going on with respect to the investigation.

I could read you many quotes, as you know, because we've read them in here before, about things you have said about ministerial accountability and about how it's better to have a minister step aside when this kind of investigation is going on that could involve him, things he's done or decisions he's made. So I just ask you again, will you consider having the right thing done here, which is to ask him to step aside for the relatively brief period of this investigation?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I think the best thing for us to do and the appropriate thing for us to do under the circumstances is to invite the Auditor General in and to give him full and free rein. I put it right into the letter that we will give him all the co-operation he needs in order to have access to all the information he needs. I'm confident that that's the best way for us to deal with this issue, I'm confident that that serves the public interest, just as I remain confident in the ability of Minister Colle to continue to do his good work on behalf of immigrants and in support of immigration services.

**Mr. Tory:** My final supplementary is with respect to the letter, of course, which we just received, that you've written to the Auditor General. Can I take it that this language that I read here should be taken as nothing less than an invitation, absolutely unrestricted and unqualified, for the Auditor General to look at any aspect of this entire matter that he wishes? Because there is language in here about things being taken in certain contexts and that there's money that's left over at the end of the year and so forth and so on. Can I take it that what this really means—and it could have been said shorter—is an unqualified, unrestricted examination by the auditor to get to the bottom of this matter and submit a full report by July?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Yes, I can offer that assurance, without reservation.



There is a reference in the letter to the practice. It says in here, "As has always been the case, governments respond to evolving revenue information by making year-end investment decisions to support public policy objectives which are consistent with generally accepted accounting principles."

That is not with a view to limiting the ambit of the review about to be conducted by the Auditor General. Rather, I'm asking that he, among everything else he might choose to comment on, comment on this practice, which has been around for a long, long time, when there is a change in revenue expectations. Governments over the decades have dealt with those in various ways. I'm asking him to comment specifically on that, in addition to the money that went out to support immigration services.

**The Speaker:** New question?

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** Premier, the question I want to ask is this: For three weeks, members of the opposition have been calling for an immediate investigation and report by the Auditor General. For three weeks, you and members of your government have voted against such an investigation and report by the Auditor General. You voted against a resolution here in the Legislature, in the public accounts committee, and just yesterday, you said that such an investigation was not required. Premier, can you tell us what changed after three weeks of stonewalling?

1420

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I infer from the question that the leader of the NDP supports the step that we have taken today as a government and believes that it's the appropriate direction for us to pursue.

I have provided the leader of the NDP with a copy of the letter that we have just sent to Mr. McCarter, the Auditor General of Ontario. We're asking him to move as expeditiously as possible. We have asked that he report by the beginning of July at the outside. But we think that is the appropriate thing to do in the circumstances, and we look forward to him completing his work. We offer him our every support and co-operation as he undertakes that work, and we ask that he move as quickly as he can.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, I think the people of Ontario, I think all those editorials written across the province, the people who are asking the questions, deserve an explanation. If we go back to April 24, when I asked you for an auditor's investigation, your response was that my request was an effort on my part to smear you and the government. I simply want to ask, Premier, just a few days ago when we asked for an auditor's investigation and an auditor's report, you were saying that we were trying to smear you and smear your government. Tell me, what has changed, Premier? What has changed from your total opposition to an investigation and report by the Auditor General? What has changed between now and then?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I want to assure the leader of the NDP, members of this House and the people of Ontario generally that we will continue to find oppor-

tunities to support immigration services in the province of Ontario.

Just today, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration announced that we're going to do still more to break down barriers for internationally trained nurses. The Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses will receive over \$2 million to expand its successful bridging programs for internationally educated nurses, including exam-preparation courses, individual feedback and tutoring, occupation-specific language training and clinical workplace experience. What we've discovered is that through these bridge training programs, it gives a huge leg up to new arrivals so that they become accustomed to the testing and get some workplace experience, so that they can quickly be accelerated to a point where they can work at their highest level of training. They've proven to be very effective—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Final supplementary?

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, just as before we were asking a very simple and straightforward question—we were asking for an Auditor General investigation and report on the McGuinty government slush fund—I'm asking you again a very straightforward question. For three weeks, you and your Minister of Citizenship and backbenchers voted against every measure to bring in the Auditor General. You denigrated any member of the opposition who asked for an investigation and report by the Auditor General. There were insinuations and innuendo of racism whenever opposition members asked for an investigation and a report by the Auditor General. I think you owe the people of Ontario an explanation. What changed? What changed from a smear campaign to now saying a report, an investigation by the Auditor General, is required?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, I think the appropriate thing for us to do in the circumstances is to do what we've done: to invite the Auditor General to take a look at this and to provide his best possible advice.

Again, we will continue our work. I think we've laid a pretty solid foundation in terms of providing ongoing supports to newcomers. In addition to the program just announced today by the minister, we've also, as you will know, Speaker, negotiated the first ever Canada-Ontario immigration agreement. That will provide us with an additional \$920 million of federal funds for newcomer services. We have in place now our new Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, which became law in March of this year. We have also created the first-ever Office of the Fairness Commissioner, who is responsible for assessing registration, licensing practices and breaking down barriers.

We will continue to move forward in a way that demonstrates our shared commitment to immigration services for new arrivals.

**The Speaker:** New question. The leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** To the Premier: Premier—

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** You're not happy, Howard. Be happy.



**The Speaker:** The Minister of Natural Resource will come to order.

**Mr. Hampton:** Please, Speaker. I think he needs some help.

I think you'd agree with me, Premier, that calling now for a special investigation by the Auditor General is not something that usually happens in the case of a minister or in the case of a ministry. You have now called for a special investigation by the Auditor General of Ontario. That's something none of us have the authority to call for. Only members of the cabinet have that authority. Premier, how can a cabinet minister stay in his position as a cabinet minister when you've now asked for a special investigation of a \$32-million slush fund which happened under that minister's nose? How can he stay in his position while a special investigation is under way by the Auditor General?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Actually, the wording is a special assignment, under section 17 of the Auditor General Act, which is the kind of assignment that was also made by the Minister of Energy.

I've expressed, in answer to a question from the leader of the official opposition, my decision to keep Minister Colle in his position. He has my continuing confidence. He is completely devoted to the cause of finding ways to support opportunity for new Canadians in the province of Ontario. I think he has demonstrated that he's bona fide, time and time again, both in terms of the new programs he has been able to roll out and the new initiatives he's put in place. The number of events that he attends in support of new Canadians around the province, but in particular here in the GTA, is absolutely staggering. He continues to have my confidence.

**Mr. Hampton:** The Premier may choose to use different words, but the reality is that the Auditor General can only investigate ministries in two ways: One is what is called an ordinary end-of-the-year investigation and report. The other is a special process. This is not going to be an ordinary at-the-end-of-the-year examination of the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, which falls under the responsibility of Mr. Colle. This is going to be a special investigation and report. I say to the Premier again, are these the standards of your government, that a minister can undergo a special investigation and report by the Auditor General of Ontario for \$32 million that was handed out without announcement, without any formal application process, without any criteria and without any follow-up, auditing or evaluation? Is this the standard of the McGuinty government, that a minister stays in his post while under—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** It is true that the Auditor General does conduct a general audit at year end and he has it within his purview to decide which areas he's going to lend particular emphasis to. But he also, through the legislation, under the Auditor General Act, creates opportunities for the government of the day to invite him or her to examine specific issues and to conduct an audit on some of our practices. That's what we've done.

I think the best thing in the circumstances now is to allow him to do his work. I've assured him of our complete co-operation. He can be as expansive on this matter as he desires. I've asked him to touch on the practice of the way governments have traditionally managed year-end monies. I expect that he will be thorough, and I've also asked him to be expeditious. But I think that the best thing for all of us to do now is simply to co-operate with him in any way possible and to allow him to get his work done.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, I'm all for the Auditor General being allowed to do his work. In fact, I wanted to see the Auditor General doing this work three weeks ago, but you stonewalled for that long.

The question is this, Premier: This minister and his ministry will now be subject to a special audit by the Auditor General, a special audit, and let me refer as the Globe and Mail does: "Laughter is a fitting response to the absurd tales the Ontario government is telling about the \$32 million it gave away to groups, some with Liberal connections, without publicizing the fund, without creating a formal application process, without even bothering to give the fund a name."

1430

Premier, that is the gravity of the situation: \$32 million of public money went out the door—no process, no name for the grant and no criteria. Are you saying that it's okay for a minister to stay in his office when he is now going to be subject to a special audit of how \$32 million went out the door with no process, no announcement and no criteria for evaluating the proposals? Is that the McGuinty government standard in Ontario today?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I think there's a distinction between serving the public interest and serving partisan interest. I think allowing the Auditor General to do his work serves the public interest. We've assured him of our complete co-operation. We've asked him to get this done in short order. I've just assured the leader of the official opposition that I'm not putting any restrictions or reservations of any kind on his review, and I'm asking him to proceed.

I think, given the circumstances, that the best thing all of us can do now is to simply assure him of our co-operation, show him our determination to allow him access to all the information he needs and wait for the outcome of his review.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** My question is for the Premier and it concerns the slush funds being run by his government. Recently the Premier, in talking about money going to various cultural groups, said, "The money goes out the door, just like that.... No application form. No formal process." But when the Minister of Culture was asked about the Premier's statement, she contradicted the Premier and said there was an application process. So I asked her again on Tuesday, and her answer was a bizarre recital of her briefing book. I'm hoping the Premier will be able to shed some light on the matter. So I'm asking, through you, Mr. Speaker, which



version of events was correct: the one told to us by the Premier or the one told to us by the Minister of Culture?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** Mr. Speaker, through you to my friend from York North, just to confirm to all members of the House: Every expenditure in government, whether it is part of the original estimates presented here in the Legislature or supplementary estimates, is reviewed by Management Board of Cabinet, treasury board of cabinet, before being approved by the full cabinet.

**Mrs. Munro:** It is a very simple question, and I don't know why the Premier refuses to answer it. He made a clear statement with respect to the cultural groups, "The money goes out the door, just like that.... No application form. No formal process." But his minister said there was and so have you. One has to be wrong. So I ask the Premier again, through you, Mr. Speaker, who gave us the correct version: the Premier or the minister?

**The Speaker:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I thought I was very clear with my friend from York North, but I'll try to review it again.

Every single expenditure is reviewed and approved by the treasury board and Management Board of Cabinet. In the expenditures that she's talking about, I think we made it clear several weeks ago that what was wanting was a process, and that that process has now changed, and my friend the minister has got very stringent criteria for future programs.

But I want to tell her again a third time so that it's very clear: Every single expenditure is reviewed and approved by Management Board of Cabinet and treasury board before being approved by cabinet as a whole.

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** I have a question to the Minister of Education. We checked the budgets of all the boards across Ontario, and of all the ones we reviewed, 64 had numbers that reveal the following: \$550 million is being raised by parent councils across Ontario. People for Education did their own study. They came up with the same conclusion. We have moved, and are moving, beyond the bake sale, do you understand? The Peel board said, "We're open for business," and they say it might include raising money for capital-related or small-scale capital items such as computers, furniture, street signage and so on. There might also be occasions when there will be fundraising for capital projects such as a school auditorium, theatre and/or pool.

We believe that we're moving the threshold beyond where you or anyone else ever dreamed of. Where do you draw the line on this, Minister?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** Let me just say off the top that this is an issue that I take very seriously. In fact, in 1997 I was part of the group that put together the survey that People for Education

uses, so I'm very, very familiar with it—in fact, the whole issue of fundraising we've been talking about for many years in this province when the member opposite was a member of the Toronto school board. So I'm paying close attention to this issue.

We have put \$3.5 billion back into education in this province. I know that it is going to take some time yet to recover from the damage that was done by the previous government to publicly funded education in this province: eight years to get us into this mess. We've been at this for just over three and a half years. We're climbing out of that hole. There is more to be done, but \$3.5 billion has gone back into the system.

**Mr. Marchese:** Minister, 64 boards report having raised \$550 million, money of which we are aware. It could be more because some money is not reported. When you include other boards that don't include how much money they've raised, we're into \$600 million, possibly \$700 million. It cannot be acceptable to you. You know—

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** You're making it up.

**Mr. Marchese:** Oh no, Georgie, we're not making this up. We did the study, and People for Education did the same study. The evidence is very clear: Parents cannot, do not have the time to raise this kind of money. They do not have the time, the energy or the money to fundraise for essentials. You know that and we know that. We have introduced a bill that says that a school council shall ensure that any funds raised by it or by any other person or entity are not used for expenditures on the operating costs of capital undertakings of a school. Will you support that bill, Minister? Can we count on your support, or is two-tiered education all right with you?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** As is the wont of the NDP, the issue is being completely oversimplified. The member opposite knows that—

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** That's a nice word.

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** Yes. Here's the thing. I have said I take this issue very seriously. I am gathering information. I know the concerns around what's happening in Peel. I know that those concerns are there. The People for Education report, which is the document upon which the member has made his claim, also says this: "Elementary class sizes are smaller, there are fewer students on waiting lists for special education, and there are more elementary schools with physical education teachers. Graduation rates are up." Kids are doing better on their "EQAO tests, and on international tests, Ontario schools rank among the highest." That has been the result of our investment. I understand the concerns of the member opposite. It is something that we are paying attention to. In fact, we have made it clear to boards that we—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. New question.



## ENDANGERED SPECIES

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce):** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Through you, Mr. Speaker, my question is regarding the Endangered Species Act, which will make Ontario a North American leader in species-at-risk protection and recovery. Compare this to the Tory legacy which, according to the 2002 auditor's report, "left threatened animals and plants at risk of extinction due to the lack of overall strategy for protecting endangered species."

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At committee yesterday, the opposition parties tabled amendments that would effectively gut this legislation. Conservative amendments included watering down the definition of habitat, preventing effective interim habitat protection and eliminating automatic listings of species at risk based on scientific data.

According to Janet Sumner, director of Wildlands League, the Conservative motions appeared to be aimed at harming endangered species.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the minister is, can he please tell this House why Bill 184 is so important, and can he explain the ramifications—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. The question has been asked.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I would like to thank the member for Huron–Bruce. I also appreciate the invitation she gave me about a month ago, when we went up to her riding and had a consultation on this bill with the agricultural community there. It went very well.

I want to make clear that this legislation is a giant step forward and, I'm going to say now, when passed, will be the best bill in North America in regard to species at risk. We're very proud of that.

I was appalled at the Conservative motions from the committee the other day. One of those amendments would have watered down the habitat definition. This is just not acceptable, as it would not achieve effective interim habitat protection, and you can't effectively protect a species if you don't protect their habitat. If you don't have interim protection of that species, it will be further imperilled while you develop a recovery strategy.

The second Conservative motion would have eliminated the automatic listing of a species. Their objective with this was to get rid of the scientific listing, which is a very key principle of this legislation. I also disagree with the premise here and believe that the science should prevail and the protection—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mrs. Mitchell:** Thank you, Minister, for providing that insight.

The Conservatives weren't the only opposition party that tabled amendments. The NDP put forward some as well. Unfortunately, their amendments would also have watered down the bill.

Dr. Rick Smith, executive director of Environmental Defence, pointed out yesterday that "the NDP allege that

they are friends of the environment, but their motions would undermine the Endangered Species Act. In this case the NDP's actions are completely at odds with its rhetoric."

During committee hearings, we listened to many different groups about how this legislation may impact rural landowners. Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Natural Resources: Can the minister please clarify for us the impact this bill will have on rural Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** I just want to say to the Legislature that the Liberal Party of Ontario is 100% committed to protecting endangered species. That's why we're moving ahead with this legislation.

I believe that Robert Wright, counsel for Sierra Legal, put it best when he said, "Bill 184 cries out for all-party support." He went on to say that "with this new act we will have a more effective and more flexible system that will emphasize recovery and substantial funding for private stewardship efforts. The \$18-million stewardship fund that accompanies this bill will be key to its success."

Stewardship is a very important part of this legislation. The Ministry of Natural Resources will continue to work with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and landowners, along with many other stakeholders, to develop a program that ensures the continuation of endangered species.

I have heard concerns from many groups about the MNR entering private land, and I want to make sure it's very clear that this legislation gives no authority for government officials to enter private land.

MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP  
AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** Mr. Speaker, through you to the Premier: I want to indicate, of course, that we appreciate his announcement today. He has obviously been dragged kicking and screaming to this decision. After three weeks going through the public accounts committee and opposition day, and week after week of questions in this House without answers, today, for some puzzling reason, whether it was overnight polls or whatever, he has finally come to the right decision.

I think it's important for all Ontarians that the Premier elaborate, Mr. Speaker, and I ask, through you, for some explanation with respect to why the change of heart? What happened, after three weeks of struggling and fighting with this government to do the right thing, that today they finally have done it?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The opposition can't take yes for an answer. They have admittedly been raising this issue for quite some time now.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I'm not going to go there.

In the end, I think it serves the public interest. There have been a number of questions raised, there has been innuendo, there have been allegations—all kinds of those things. I think the best way for us to have conclusive



findings, in combination with some good public policy advice, is to refer it to the Auditor General, and that's exactly what we've now done.

**Mr. Runciman:** I'm sure the Premier will categorize this as something less than factual, but I couldn't help but be struck by the fact that I was walking by the Whitney block yesterday afternoon and there was a large shredder standing outside the building.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The Minister of Finance will come to order. The Attorney General will come to order.

The member for Leeds—Grenville.

**Mr. Runciman:** It does lead me to ask a question about the preservation of evidence and the ability of the Auditor General to conduct a thorough investigation, including talking to the—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** I will not warn the Attorney General again, and I would like him to withdraw that last—

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** Withdrawn.

**Mr. Runciman:** I think it's an appropriate question to ask about the preservation of evidence. Certainly, as the Premier indicated, serious allegations and questions have arisen over the course of the past few weeks with respect to the awarding of monies to organizations without any application or approval or audit process. I think we have the very legitimate right to ask the Premier: Has all the evidence that may have some impact with respect to the auditor reaching a conclusion been adequately preserved?

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: As I read the standing orders for rules of debate, "In debate, a member shall be called to order by the Speaker if he or she ... imputes false or unavowed motives to another member."

**The Speaker:** That would be so, Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I think the opposition historically has had, and should have, tremendous latitude when it comes to holding the government to account. That is their job; that is their supreme responsibility. But I think there's a line you can cross from time to time. I would say to my honourable colleague that I think he comes dangerously close to crossing that line in somehow suggesting that we have been active in destroying evidence. I personally find that offensive. I think he's dangerously close to that line.

I offer to the Auditor General our entire co-operation so he has access to all the information connected to this so that he can conduct a thorough review.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York):** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Prue:** Mr. Speaker, if I can get the floor—

**The Speaker:** Order.

The member for Beaches—East York.

**Mr. Prue:** A question to the Premier: After weeks of stonewalling and delay, you have, by your actions today, admitted that there is a serious problem at the Ministry of

Citizenship and Immigration. In taking the extraordinary action under section 17, which has only been done once before in the history of this Parliament, you are calling for an extraordinary investigation.

My question, through you, Mr. Speaker, is very simple: While the investigation is being conducted, will the Premier ask the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to step aside pending the auditor's report?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I've answered that question. I can, for the benefit of the member, make it perfectly clear that it is not my intention to ask the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to step aside. I think the appropriate thing to do in the circumstances is what I think we all thought we should do—I thought there was some collective sense that that was the appropriate thing to do—which is to invite the Auditor General to take a look at this. That is, in fact, going to happen. We provided him with our assurance of our entire co-operation, and I think we should just now allow him to get on with his work.

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**Mr. Prue:** The Premier, by his very actions here today, has been forced to admit that the ministry potentially and possibly may not have been run in the best style possible. He has been forced to admit that there were serious problems with the way the money was distributed. He has been forced, after three solid weeks of questioning, to call in the auditor. My question through you, Mr. Speaker, is very simple again: How could any minister of the crown, including this one, possibly continue under such an investigation?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I think what we have to ask ourselves is, what serves the public interest here? It is true there has been much by way of innuendo and allegations. We would dispute those, but we've now invited an independent individual to review the matter and to provide his best advice with respect to how to move forward when it comes to supporting immigration services, particularly insofar as those relate to year-end monies.

So I would suggest to my friend opposite that he remain patient. We assure him and the auditor of our full co-operation, and we should simply now allow him to do his job.

## ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVES

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa—Orléans):** My question is for the Minister of Education. When we say "safe schools," we are talking about learning environments that are safe for students physically, emotionally and psychologically. We know bullying can take its toll in all three areas.

The members opposite didn't get it right when they introduced the so-called zero tolerance policy into our schools, and they didn't get it right by not including bullying as an infraction. I understand that we are changing the safe schools legislation to include bullying as an infraction. The parents in my riding are very supportive of this change, as bullying in our schools is one of the major concerns I consistently hear about.

Minister, can you advise the House and my constituents of the other initiatives we have undertaken to prevent bullying from happening in our schools?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** I completely agree with the member that preventing bullying in the first place is extremely important. We've invested \$7.83 million into schools for bullying prevention programs. That's \$1,500 per elementary school and \$2,000 for every secondary school. We've established a three-year, \$3-million partnership with Kids Help Phone, which will double the 24-hour helpline's capacity to provide counselling to students. That'll help 30,000 more students a year.

We've provided training for 7,450 principals and vice-principals on bullying prevention. It's very clear that the leadership in the school is extremely important in having the whole school community understand how bullying works and how to prevent it.

We've also invested in AirDogs and mirror-image software, provided to 3,100 schools for grade 7 and 8 students, which deal with issues of Internet bullying, luring, cyber-stalking and child pornography. And I have to say that that issue of the role of the Internet in bullying and cyber-bullying is the single most important issue that people raise with me these days.

**Mr. McNeely:** Just a few days ago, a young student was waiting for a bus in my riding of Ottawa—Orléans when she was shot in the eye from a paintball gun by a passenger from a moving vehicle. This was a cowardly and criminal act, and that young girl has suffered serious injury to her eye. That incident isn't bullying, but it's associated with it.

My constituents have told me that we must reduce bullying-related activity and behaviour in our schools, and it will please them to know that these initiatives will help serve that purpose.

It's very interesting that when the member from Leeds—Grenville was asked about our proposed amendments to the safe schools legislation, the member said, "Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater," commenting that the current act works. I suppose the member just doesn't get it when it comes to safe schools in general, and bullying prevention in particular.

Minister, with respect to the \$7.83 million for bullying prevention programs you alluded to, will you please advise the member from Leeds—Grenville, as well as the rest of the members in the House, how this specific initiative will help prevent kids from being bullied?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** I know that the member for Leeds—Grenville would be pleased to know that of the \$7.83 million I talked about that's been invested in bullying prevention, \$66,000, or \$1,500 per school, will be invested in the 44 elementary schools in his riding, and \$20,000, or \$2,000 per school, will be invested in the 10 secondary schools in his riding. So those bullying prevention strategies will be developed at the school level, which is entirely appropriate, with resources given to the schools and the school boards by the provincial government.

There's a distinct difference between the way we engage school communities and the way the previous government did. We engage our educators, we talk to parents, we bring students, parents and educators into the creation of our policies. That's the reason that Lou Rocha of the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario said, "There has never been a time in Ontario's history when such a singular goal has been articulated so clearly and consistently across the sector," and that's the same moral purpose of improving teaching—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. New question?

#### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. I ask the minister this: If there was no reason at all, then I presume there wouldn't be any investigation commenced at the request of the Premier this afternoon. The Premier specifically mentioned that there have been allegations made, and the fact is, when allegations are made, they get investigated, and that's why the auditor is here.

The minister knows that he is at the heart of the decision-making process here and that in fact a large part of what is going to be looked into is decisions that he made, grants that he personally allocated.

Other people on both sides of the House in the past, when they have been at the heart of the decision-making process that's being inquired into, such as we have here, have decided at their own instigation, let alone being asked, that the honourable thing and the proper thing to do is to step aside until that inquiry is finished so that the ministry can operate without any kind of distraction and so on and so forth. It's not because of who you are, but it's because of the position you hold.

I wonder if you've given any thought to standing aside during the course of this investigation so there can be no questions asked while it proceeds and you can be free to participate in it without the burdens—

**The Speaker:** Minister?

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I totally welcome the Auditor General's coming in. I think it is something that will again reaffirm the fact that a lot of the investments we've made are in organizations and programs that we are proud of. I think the Premier's invitation to the Auditor General is the appropriate thing to do. My office and I, myself, will totally co-operate with every aspect of this investigation by the Auditor General.

**The Speaker:** Supplementary? I will remind the Leader of the Opposition that he needs to place the questions through me, in the third person.

**Mr. Tory:** I thought I did, Mr. Speaker, but certainly. Thank you. I wonder if I could, then, ask the minister, because he didn't answer the question the first time—maybe it was because I didn't put it through you, sir.



I would like to ask the minister whether he doesn't think it might be better, from the standpoint of the public's perception of the inquiry that's under way, the public's perception as to the continued operation of your ministry without any distraction on your part by this investigation—in terms of consistency with past parliamentary practice where ministers in many cases have not waited to be asked by the Premier but have in fact felt that the appropriate thing to do was to step aside so as to allow an investigation to take place without being there, and to take full part in it without the constraints of being a minister, for that matter. I wonder if you've given any thought to that and to making that offer on your own, regardless of what the Premier's standard is in this matter.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** As I said, the opposition has been asking for the Provincial Auditor to undertake this review of those investments we made, and that's exactly what he's going to do. He has, as I said before, updated and expanded powers that we've given him. The Premier has done the right thing. As the minister, I will do whatever I can to co-operate with the review, and second, continue to do the much-needed work that must be done across Ontario in many areas of immigrant settlement and language training. This work must continue. I will continue to be committed to that work. The Provincial Auditor's review will take place with all the powers that he has.

**The Speaker:** New question, member for Beaches—East York.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York):** My question is to the Premier. On April 10, 2000, an MPP told this House: "I want to talk about your double standard. When a staff member of Minister Jim Wilson revealed confidential information, Wilson rightfully stepped aside. Bob Runciman also stepped aside when a matter affecting his ministry was under investigation. Steve Gilchrist, reluctantly but ultimately, did the right thing and stepped aside after the police were investigating him.... The precedent has been set."

That MPP was you, Mr. Premier; that MPP was Dalton McGuinty. In light of the standard that you set yourself in the year 2000, is it not right that your minister step aside?

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**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** No, I disagree with the honourable member. I've said why before, and I would be pleased to repeat that again. We're talking about a review here that we've asked the Auditor General to conduct, a special audit, for him to come in and take a look at the circumstances here. We've assured him of all of our co-operation. We've asked him to move as quickly as he possibly can. I think the best thing to do in the circumstances, that which best serves the public interest, as distinct from a partisan interest, is for us to simply allow the Auditor General to do his work. That's what we intend to do.

**Mr. Prue:** In the Premier's own words, the precedent has been set. The Ministry of Citizenship and Immi-

gration is under an extraordinary audit, only the second time in the history of this House that a similar audit has been done and the first time against the ministry. Even the minister has admitted that there were serious errors; even the Premier has admitted that things could have been done better and has instituted a whole new program. How can the minister continue under this cloud when even you, by your own past statements, admit that he should not?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, we're not comparing this to police investigations. We're talking about a government that I would argue remains firmly committed to this notion of transparency and accountability, whether you take a look at what we've done with respect to the sunshine law, which incorporates salary disclosures—we've expanded that to include OPG and Hydro One—the additional authorities we've given the Auditor General himself and his office to audit hospitals, school boards and children's aid societies; what we've done to the freedom of information legislation to expand it to include Hydro One, OPG and universities; and to the Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act that ensures that the auditor looks at the state of public finances before an election.

Minister Duncan invited the Auditor General to do a special audit; now I've asked the Auditor General to do a special audit. If anything, this speaks to our determination to introduce ever more accountability and transparency into our government.

## WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Minister, I have an important question about safe, clean drinking water in rural Ontario, and I would like to make sure that the rural citizens of Leeds—Grenville, indeed all of rural Ontario, are properly informed about the McGuinty government policy in regard to rural Ontario.

Last week, a petition claiming that the government is contemplating legislation mandating water meters on private wells was forwarded to my office. This petition is absent of fact. It is being circulated by local Progressive Conservative members and candidates.

There was a newspaper article that appeared in the Colborne Chronicle on Thursday, May 3, and it states "that Mrs. Galt said yesterday she sent the petition through her electronic mailing list after it was sent to her by Progressive Conservative MPP Bob Runciman. Bill 198 does not make mention of metering private wells, but information given" by "Mr. Runciman indicates that such a regulation could be in the works...."

Will the minister please help me set the record straight? It's important that we reassure the many hard-working rural Ontarians and their families.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I want to thank the member for Northumberland for his championing of rural Ontario and for his keen interest in ensuring that we set the record straight.

As I have said numerous times in this House and while traveling throughout rural Ontario, the McGuinty government has absolutely no plans to meter private, residential wells. I find it absolutely shocking that the members of the opposition and their now newly nominated candidates continue to scaremonger and play politics with water resources in rural Ontario.

They only need to take a few minutes and read Bill 198, because that bill puts in place something they refused to do. It will protect water for the future of this province. Agriculture is exempted, private homes are exempted, institutions are exempted. We will ensure that we provide good, clean, safe water to rural Ontario for generations to come.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** Thank you for reminding rural Ontarians that the McGuinty government has no plans to meter private residential wells in rural Ontario.

Further to my first question, last week I received a letter from Robert Kyle, commissioner and medical officer of health for Durham region, in response to the Say No to Meters on Private Wells petition that was circulated.

The letter states, "I am writing to confirm that the statement of the alleged 'secret agenda to require the installation of meters on all water wells in the province of Ontario' attributed to me is completely false."

Instead of fearmongering, the members of the Conservative caucus should get their facts straight.

Minister, instead of spreading misinformation about residential wells, I know you are working hard to make sure that rural Ontarians have clean, safe drinking water.

Will the minister tell rural Ontarians how we have improved the wells regulation?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** At the beginning of our mandate, one of the things that we had to do was fix the mess that the last government left us, and throughout our term in office, we have done that on every occasion.

The wells regulation, regulation 903, is consistent with Walkerton recommendation 86. It states that the provincial government is to provide the public with information about how to supply water safely and ensure the availability of microbiological testing.

We have funded a number of programs across the province.

I continue to reach out and work with rural Ontario, work with AMO, work with ROMA, to receive input to make sure that those regulations meet the needs of rural Ontario.

Our Well Aware program is second to none.

We will ensure that rural Ontario has clean, safe drinking water for generations and generations to come, something that the last government was a dismal failure with respect to.

#### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier. The Premier gave us an interesting recitation a few moments ago about his govern-

ment's great commitment to transparency, yet we had a situation—and it's just interesting to sort of review the history of this and try to see how we can explain some things that happened over the last couple of weeks.

One of the other things the Premier said in the last election which he has not followed through on is that he would empower committees of the Legislature and give members of the Legislature more responsibility.

This very matter went to the public accounts committee a couple of weeks ago, and a motion was put that would have started this very same process two weeks ago to have the Auditor General look into this matter, yet the Premier's office instructed the Liberal members to vote against this, and it was voted down.

I just wondered if the Premier would be kind enough to explain why his members would have come to a meeting two weeks ago—we could have had this investigation started at that time—why they were instructed to vote down the very matter that the Premier initiated today.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** We work together as a strong caucus. We consider these matters on an ongoing basis, and one of the things that we were determined to do with respect to this particular issue was to ensure that we continued to move toward, both effectively and from a perception perspective, greater transparency. When you consider the steps that we've taken toward greater transparency and accountability, it only made sense, from that perspective alone. There are other good reasons to do this, but from that perspective alone, the appropriate thing for us to do, which we have decided to do together, is to invite the Auditor General to come in and take a look at this matter, review it thoroughly and give us his best advice.

#### PETITIONS

##### STEVENSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Stevenson Memorial Hospital needs \$1.4 million in new funding over the next three years to get its birthing unit reopened and to ensure that they can recruit enough obstetricians and health care providers to supply a stable and ongoing service for expectant mothers in our area; and

"Whereas forcing expectant mothers to drive to Newmarket, Barrie or Orangeville to give birth is not only unacceptable, it is a potential safety hazard; and

"Whereas Stevenson Memorial Hospital cannot reopen the unit under its current budget and the McGuinty government has been unresponsive to repeated requests for new funding;

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"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:



"That the McGuinty Liberal government immediately provide the required \$1.4 million in new funding to Stevenson Memorial Hospital so that the local birthing unit can reopen and so that mothers can give birth in Alliston."

I want to thank Sylvia Biffis from Alliston for sending that to me and all the people who signed the petition. Of course, I'm signing the petition.

#### GTA POOLING

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I have a petition here to the Ontario Legislative Assembly for which I would like very much to thank Gail and Dave Gibbons of Thomas Street in Mississauga for kindly mailing it along to me. It reads as follows:

"End GTA Pooling: Pass Ontario Budget

"Whereas the city of Mississauga has a long-term labour shortage, resulting in some 60,000 more people commuting into the city of Mississauga than leave Mississauga to earn their living and support their families each and every day; and

"Whereas 10 years ago the Ontario government of that day introduced the concept of GTA pooling, whereby funds are taken from the municipalities surrounding the city of Toronto and channelled into the city of Toronto without benefit or accountability to the taxpayers of those fast-growing cities, which face big-city needs and issues of their own; and

"Whereas GTA pooling places an additional tax burden on the municipal property tax bases of some \$40 million each and every year to the city of Mississauga; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario in its 2007-08 budget proposes to completely eliminate GTA pooling during a seven-year span beginning in fiscal year 2007-08, and that as pooling is phased out, Ontario will take responsibility for social assistance and social housing costs currently funded by GTA pooling;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That all parties within the government of Ontario support the swift passage of the 2007-08 Ontario budget and ensure that its provisions ending GTA pooling are implemented."

Very eloquently put. I'm pleased to affix my signature in support and to ask page Matei to carry it for me.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** I have a petition regarding the Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare funding. It reads:

"Whereas demand for health services is expected to continue to rise with a growing retirement population in Muskoka-East Parry Sound; and

"Whereas studies indicate that overcrowded emergency rooms result in higher mortality rates; and

"Whereas growing demand and lack of availability of long-term-care beds place increased pressure on acute care beds; and

"Whereas the operating budget for MAHC must reflect the growing demand for service in the communities of Muskoka-East Parry Sound;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the McGuinty government and the Minister of Health provide adequate increases in the operating budget of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare to maintain current health services for the people of Muskoka-East Parry Sound and allocate more long-term-care beds for Muskoka-East Parry Sound."

#### REGULATION OF ZOOS

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I have a petition today to regulate zoos. I want to thank my good friends John and Nora Martyn, who live at 1219 Bridle Drive in Peterborough, Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

"Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

"Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

"Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife, and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and

"Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act."

I'm in favour of this petition and will affix my signature to it.

#### SCHOOL FACILITIES

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the parents of St. Paul's elementary school in Alliston have raised many issues regarding the security, cleanliness and state of repair of their school; and

"Whereas a 2003 condition assessment completed by the Ontario government identified the need for \$1.8 million in repairs to St. Paul's elementary school; and

"Whereas the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board has approached the Ministry of Education with the intention of having the school deemed prohibitive to repair as they believe the school requires \$2.28 million in repairs, or 84% of the school replacement cost; and

"Whereas there are ongoing concerns with air quality, heating and ventilation, electrical, plumbing, lack of air

conditioning and the overall structure of the building, including cracks from floor to ceiling, to name a few;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Education immediately deem St. Paul's elementary school prohibitive to repair, secure immediate funding and begin construction of a new facility so that the children of St. Paul's can be educated in a facility that is secure and offers them the respect and dignity that they deserve."

I want to thank Milva Biffis and Gaynor McLeary for that, and of course this is the school my mother taught at and the grade school I went to.

### GTA POOLING

**Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** This petition is to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

"End GTA Pooling: Pass Ontario Budget

"Whereas the city of Mississauga faces a long-term labour shortage, resulting in some 60,000 more people commuting into the city of Mississauga than leave Mississauga to earn their living and support their families each and every day; and

"Whereas 10 years ago the Ontario government of that day introduced the concept of GTA pooling, whereby funds are taken from the municipalities surrounding the city of Toronto and channelled into the city of Toronto without benefit or accountability to the taxpayers of those fast-growing cities, which face big-city needs and issues of their own; and

"Whereas GTA pooling places an additional tax burden on the municipal property tax bases of some \$40 million each and every year to the city of Mississauga; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario in its 2007-08 budget proposes to completely eliminate GTA pooling during a seven-year span beginning in fiscal year 2007-08, and that as pooling is phased out, Ontario will take responsibility for social assistance and social housing costs currently funded by GTA pooling;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That all parties within the government of Ontario support the swift passage of the 2007-08 Ontario budget and ensure that its provisions ending GTA pooling are implemented."

I agree with the petitioners, so I put my signature on this petition as well.

### FREDERICK BANTING HOMESTEAD

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Sir Frederick Banting was the man who discovered insulin and was Canada's first Nobel Prize recipient; and

"Whereas this great Canadian's original homestead, located in the town of New Tecumseth"—Alliston—"is deteriorating and in danger of destruction because of the inaction of the Ontario Historical Society; and

"Whereas the town of New Tecumseth has been unsuccessful in reaching an agreement with the Ontario Historical Society to use part of the land to educate the public about the historical significance of the work of Sir Frederick Banting;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Culture endorse Simcoe-Grey MPP Jim Wilson's private member's bill entitled the Frederick Banting Homestead Preservation Act so that the homestead is kept in good repair and preserved for generations to come."

Of course, I agree with that petition and will sign it.

### REGULATION OF ZOOS

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** I will read a petition from my colleague from Markham, the Minister of Revenue, Michael Chan. The petition is to regulate zoos to protect animals and communities and it reads:

"Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

"Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

"Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

"Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife, and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and

"Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act."

I agree and I'll sign this petition.

### HIGHWAY 26

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 was approved by MPP Jim Wilson and the previous PC government in 2000; and

"Whereas a number of horrific fatalities and accidents have occurred on the old stretch of Highway 26; and

"Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 is critical to economic development and job creation in Simcoe-Grey;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government stop the delay of the Highway 26 redevelopment and act immediately to ensure that the project is finished on schedule, to improve



safety for area residents and provide economic development opportunities and job creation in Simcoe–Grey.”

I agree with that petition, and I’m signing it.

1520

### COMMUNITY MEDIATION

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** A petition to our assembly:

“Whereas many types of civil disputes may be resolved through community mediation delivered by trained mediators, who are volunteers who work with the parties in the dispute; and

“Whereas Inter-Cultural Neighbourhood Social Services established the Peel Community Mediation Service in 1999 with support from the government of Ontario through the Trillium Foundation, the Rotary Club of Mississauga West and the United Way of Peel, and has proven the viability and success of community mediation; and

“Whereas the city of Mississauga and the town of Caledon have endorsed the Peel Community Mediation Service, and law enforcement bodies refer many cases to the Peel Community Mediation Service as an alternative to a court dispute; and

“Whereas court facilities and court time are both scarce and expensive, the cost of community mediation is very small and the extra expense incurred for lack of community mediation in Peel region would be much greater than the small annual cost of funding community mediation;

“Be it therefore resolved that the government of Ontario, through the Ministry of the Attorney General, support and fund the ongoing service delivery of the Peel Community Mediation Service through Inter-Cultural Neighbourhood Social Services.”

I agree with this petition and with my good friend from Mississauga West, and sign my name and give it to page Marissa.

### SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** The Chair recognizes the senior member from Simcoe–Grey.

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker—very kind.

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty has promised to make the needs of students a priority for his government and that students deserve to have a bright future with a good education; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty has promised not to give up on students or Ontario’s public school system;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the provincial government work with the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board to establish an evening bus route from St. Joan of Arc High School in Barrie to the outlying communities. This would allow students to participate in extracurricular activities

and help them to fulfill their potential, secure a bright future and receive the best educational experience possible, as promised to them by the Premier.”

I agree with this petition, and I’m signing it.

### GTA POOLING

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** I have a petition to present to the Legislature today.

“Whereas the city of Mississauga faces a long-term labour shortage, resulting in some 60,000 more people commuting into the city of Mississauga than leave Mississauga to earn their living and support their families each and every day; and

“Whereas 10 years ago the Ontario government of that day introduced the concept of GTA pooling, whereby funds are taken from the municipalities surrounding the city of Toronto and channelled into the city of Toronto without benefit or accountability to the taxpayers of those fast-growing cities, which face big-city needs and issues of their own; and

“Whereas GTA pooling places an additional tax burden on the municipal property tax bases of some \$40 million each and every year to the city of Mississauga; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario in its 2007-08 budget proposes to completely eliminate GTA pooling during a seven-year span beginning in fiscal year 2007-08, and that as pooling is phased out, Ontario will take responsibility for social assistance and social housing costs currently funded by GTA pooling;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That all parties within the government of Ontario support the swift passage of the 2007-08 Ontario budget and ensure that its provisions ending GTA pooling are implemented.”

I’m going to sign this petition and give it to Caitlyn.

### LONG-TERM CARE

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the proposed Long-Term Care Homes Act is extremely lengthy and complex and requires full and extensive parliamentary and public debate and committee hearings throughout the province; and

“Whereas the rigid, pervasive and detailed framework proposed is excessive and will stifle innovation and flexibility in the long-term-care sector; and

“Whereas the additional burden, red tape and punitive measures imposed by the proposed legislation will aggravate and exacerbate the chronic underfunding of the sector, to the detriment of residents of the homes; and

“Whereas the proposed legislation will have serious implications for the viability of the for-profit and not-for-profit, charitable and municipal long-term-care sectors;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We demand that the McGuinty government withdraw the proposed act, or remove the offending sections, and fulfill its commitment by a substantial increase in funding on a multi-year basis in the order of the promised \$6,000 per resident, per year."

It's signed by many people from my riding, and I'm going to hand it to page Marissa.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** Pursuant to standing order 55, I rise to give the Legislature the business of the House for next week.

On Monday, May 14, 2007, in the afternoon, third reading of Bill 203, the road safety act; in the evening, third reading of Bill 103, Independent Police Review Act.

On Tuesday, May 15, 2007, in the afternoon, third reading of Bill 140, Long-Term Care Homes Act; in the evening, third reading of Bill 69, Regulatory Modernization Act.

On Wednesday, May 16, 2007, in the afternoon, third reading of Bill 184, Endangered Species Act; in the evening, third reading of Bill 140, Long-Term Care Homes Act.

On Thursday, May 17, 2007, in the afternoon, third reading of Bill 165, Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act.

## VISITORS

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I draw your attention to the parents of page Marissa, who are in the gallery with us today: Mark and Martha Hendriks from Durham region.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### STRENGTHENING BUSINESS THROUGH A SIMPLER TAX SYSTEM ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 VISANT À RENFORCER LES ENTREPRISES GRÂCE À UN RÉGIME FISCAL PLUS SIMPLE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 8, 2007, on the motion for second reading of Bill 174, An Act to enact the Taxation Act, 2007 and make complementary and other amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 174, Loi édictant la Loi de 2007 sur les impôts et apportant des modifications complémentaires et autres à diverses lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 9, 2007, I am now required to put the question.

On May 2, Mr. Sorbara moved second reading of Bill 174, An Act to enact the Taxation Act, 2007 and make

complementary and other amendments to other Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. There will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1528 to 1538.*

**The Acting Speaker:** All those in favour, please rise one at a time to be recognized.

### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Racco, Mario G.
Balkissoon, Bas	Jeffrey, Linda	Ramal, Khalil
Bentley, Christopher	Kular, Kuldip	Ramsay, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kwinter, Monte	Rinaldi, Lou
Bountrogianni, Marie	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Bradley, James J.	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Broten, Laurel C.	Levac, Dave	Scott, Laurie
Bryant, Michael	Marsales, Judy	Sergio, Mario
Caplan, David	McMeekin, Ted	Smitherman, George
Chan, Michael	McNeely, Phil	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Chudleigh, Ted	Miller, Norm	Takhar, Harinder S.
Colle, Mike	Mitchell, Carol	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	Ouellette, Jerry J.	Witmer, Elizabeth
Duncan, Dwight	Phillips, Gerry	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Qaadri, Shafiq	Zimmer, David

**The Acting Speaker:** All those opposed, please rise one at a time to be recognized.

### Nays

Ferreira, Paul	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
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**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 48; the nays are 3.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 9, the bill is ordered referred to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs.

## INDEPENDENT POLICE REVIEW ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 SUR L'EXAMEN INDÉPENDANT DE LA POLICE

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 3, 2007, on the motion for third reading of Bill 103, An Act to establish an Independent Police Review Director and create a new public complaints process by amending the Police Services Act / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à créer le poste de directeur indépendant d'examen de la police et à créer une nouvelle procédure de traitement des plaintes du public en modifiant la Loi sur les services policiers.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** Is there unanimous consent to allow Mr. Chudleigh to complete the time on the clock? Agreed.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** I wouldn't have been disappointed if they had said no. I'm not sure if this is going to beat ringing the bells.



Yesterday I had the opportunity to address the long-service medal presentation to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the Toronto west division. There were probably 50 police officers, all dressed to the nines in their red uniforms, and it brought back a lot of memories. One of my first memories was, of course, the musical ride, and I wonder how many children or adults in Canada whose first exposure to police of any sort was watching the—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Chudleigh:** They've heard it all before—musical ride charge, especially the final part of it where they all lower their lances and charge down the field. What a wonderful experience that was. The first time I saw that was at the Cooksville fairgrounds. If you can imagine, there are probably 100,000 people living on the Cooksville fairgrounds now. There are, I think, a dozen apartment buildings there. Downtown Cooksville, of course, is now just a little bit south of what is referred to as downtown Mississauga. Cooksville is the town that grew up around the intersection of Highway 5 and Highway 10 and was the focal point for people who lived in that region of Peel. There was a main shopping district. The groceries—we used to drive about a mile and a half from Dixie to the grocery store in Cooksville. I was raised in Dixie. There was great rivalry between Dixie and Cooksville, especially in hockey. Dixie used to win; we had the arena. But the rivalry continued long after Mississauga was developed. We used to drive about a mile and a half to get to the Carload grocery store, which was probably a 2,000-square-foot grocery store, about the size of a very small Mac's milk today. If we really wanted to do heavy shopping, we'd go down to the A&P store, and that was probably six miles away. That was quite a trip, so you didn't go there every week. Maybe once a month you would go down there—a little different from today, wouldn't you say?

That was my first experience with the RCMP. It was wonderful sitting there, watching them receive their 30-year pins, their 25-year pins and their 20-year pins. It was wonderful to watch as they came up one by one in their glistening uniforms and highly polished boots to receive these awards. It was a very nice pin that came in bronze, silver or gold, depending on how long they had served. Watching the uniforms as they came up, they had crossed rifles on, I believe, their left sleeve; yes, it would be their left sleeve. Every once in a while you would see an RCMP officer come up and there would be a crown on top of the crossed rifles. That crown meant he was an expert marksman. He not only had his badge for being proficient in marksmanship, but he was an expert rifleman, and in the test he went through, he had no misses. I'm not sure what that test involves; I believe it's 100 shots or something in that area. To go through that with no misses indicated that he was a pretty good shot.

Some of the older gentlemen who were receiving their 25- and 30-year pins as well had crossed .38s on their sleeves, and those represented people who had been in the force for some time.

Some of the newer members, particularly those who were getting their 20-year pins, had crossed 9-millimetre handguns on their sleeves, and that represented the change from when they used to carry .38s to today, when they carry 9-millimetre semi-automatic handguns.

It was interesting to watch the various uniforms come up and what those meant.

Up in the shoulder area of the uniform, there are clusters of stars, and every star represents five years of service. So the 30-year men, of course, had six stars on their sleeve patch, which made quite a show. The officer sitting beside me mentioned that he had known one officer who had 41 years of service and therefore eight stars, and that he had never seen anyone with more than eight stars on his sleeve.

It was a very moving ceremony, and of course very highly respected by all the police officers who were there—there were a large number of family members there as well.

When I was asked to say a few words, I mentioned to the audience that my expertise was in speaking to the Legislature and that I wasn't really used to speaking in front of a live audience—if you look around this place today, you'll understand what those comments mean.

Actually, when I mentioned that yesterday, I got a big laugh, but apparently no one is paying attention here.

**Interjection:** Ha, ha.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** Thank you. There was a giggle down here.

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South-Weston):** It's Thursday afternoon.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** It's Thursday afternoon. Apparently, my party understands that.

One of the other things that came to the fore yesterday was talk about the three groups of people: one being the politicians, who enact legislation; the second being judges, who adjudicate the laws; and the third being the police, who enforce the laws. I think the public tends to lump those three groups—law, order and good government—into the peace of the country, as to whether it's working well or not working well.

In general, I think that most people on the street feel those three groups work together somehow to create this peace and tranquility that we have, by and large, on our streets and in our cities and towns across Ontario.

It's interesting to point out that when it works, it works extremely well. We do have a very safe society, when you compare it with the rest of the world. Yes, we have areas that perhaps aren't that safe and incidents from time to time that are very scary—house invasions and those things, the new types of crime that are coming into our society. But by and large, if you measure our society from a law and order point of view against societies around the world, I think you have to come to the conclusion that Canada is certainly in the forefront, in the top three, four or five countries in the world as far as peace and tranquility are concerned within our communities.



1550

That system works so well when those three bodies that we talk about—the police, the politicians and the judges—work in isolation from each other. If you were to get political interference in the application of the law through the judges, for instance—that has happened occasionally. We hear about it happening in foreign countries. It always turns out to be an unmitigated disaster. It is the ruination of peaceful and tranquil law and order in the community in which it is being perpetrated.

When you think about political interference within the police department, again, you conjure up thoughts of a dual system, a system of some people being elite in the eyes of the police and other people being without representation. That, again, would be an unmitigated disaster for any society to work towards or to promote.

Thirdly, you could have, in some places, like in Third World countries, police influences on politicians, which would be a scary situation. That's one that I certainly wouldn't support. A police community that intimidates politicians—or judges, for that matter—would throw law and order out the window. It would not be a safe community to live in.

Those three bodies—the politicians, the police and the judges—as they create safety in our communities, as they create a society that is based on law and order and where everyone has this feeling of equality and safety within that system, those three bodies create that environment, but they must also work independently and without undue influence on each other. Many of the RCMP officers who were receiving their long-term medals yesterday also had served in foreign countries on peacekeeping forces. I didn't speak to any of them directly, but I'm sure some of them were in Haiti, and I believe that we have had them in other jurisdictions, like the Middle East. I believe that there were some in Afghanistan and there might have been some in old Yugoslavia when that was in a state of unrest. Those officers had a special insight into how our system actually works and what makes it work well, and what might not make it work well, what might influence it to fall apart at the seams. When those three entities don't work in separate towers, as it were, the risk of that happening comes to the fore.

This bill that we're talking about, Bill 103, is creating a large bureaucracy. It creates a bureaucracy that oversees police complaints. We used to have a bureaucracy like that overseeing police complaints back in the 1980s and early 1990s. My recollection is—I wasn't an elected politician then—that it was onerous, it was overbearing, it was difficult to operate under. I think that a lot of the police officers found that they were worried about what they should do. That moment of hesitation, when you think about what you have to do, perhaps takes away that moment of edge when you have the advantage on a felon or someone whom you're about to arrest. If you're a split second slow, the results might be a complete disaster for you.

It seems to me that I read a lot more about police officers in the late 1980s and early 1990s than I read

about them today. When you go over to the area just east of here that is dedicated to the fallen officers, it's one that moves you very greatly when you see the number of police officers who have given their lives in the line of duty. Anything that we can do to make sure that that doesn't happen in our society is a benefit to society. It's certainly a benefit to the police force, but it's also a great benefit to society, because out of that you get a dedicated police force and you get one that is committed to do its best in order to create and maintain a lawful society.

Rather than moving down the road so quickly on this bill which is before us today, it seems to me that there are many areas in the world that have overseers of police forces in various levels and types, and all over the world, not always in First World nations but in Third World nations as well, which have reputable, good, honest, great police forces that are doing a wonderful job in maintaining just societies and maintaining the safety of their citizens. As we look at those other countries—I'm thinking of Europe, I think of countries in the Orient, I think of other countries around the world—it seems to me that they have systems in place that protect the public in the rare cases when an overzealous officer or someone is perceived to be overstepping the bounds of their authority, that there is some method by which that can be brought back to the norm and back to the middle, back to where it should be.

It would seem to me that if we looked at other jurisdictions and did an examination of what they were doing, we could have found something different than what we're proposing to do with this Bill 103. Personally, I don't think the situation warranted a major overhaul. In fact, I'm not sure the situation, in my opinion, warranted even a small overhaul. I think the system was working extremely well.

It would be far less expensive, far less cumbersome and far less bureaucratic to do a search around the world to see what was available or what was happening. Also, another system that could have been done is that we could have formed a pilot project somewhere in Ontario. We could have selected a city. I know that a lot of the marketing groups in Ontario select cities like Peterborough as a good balance of population that mirrors the effects of Ontario. In fact, I think it mirrors fairly closely the population of Canada, as well, for those tests. When they're marketing a new food product—I was in the food business in another life. Many of the new products that were introduced would be introduced first in Peterborough to test to see if they had any public acceptance. That was something that could have been tried with this bill to see if there was a better way to do the kinds of things that we're doing, and it wouldn't have been nearly as bureaucratic, nearly as onerous and somewhat questionable by the police forces that we are so much indebted to.

The McGuinty government is planning to spend millions of dollars in overhauling the provincial police complaints process, and they're doing this without a clear—as I mentioned before—and compelling reason.



The police forces—we're not hearing an outcry; we're not seeing editorials; we're not seeing a lot of talk about what is happening with police forces that they need this overhaul. Lord knows, I think any of us or all of us feel very safe in walking down the streets of almost every town, every village, every city in Canada or in Ontario, and that wouldn't be the case if we were very nervous about the police system. The police system is maintaining that law and order extremely well, and personally I don't see the need for a revamp of the complaints process.

This bill will also create a much larger bureaucracy. Why is it that in the periods of time when we have the Liberals in government, from 1985 to 1990 and from 2003 to now, we see a spiralling increase, an upward increase, in the size of the bureaucracy? With the addition of regional complaint offices and the consideration of third party complaints—this is another problem in this bill that I'll speak to more if I get some time in a little while, that a third party to the experience can launch a complaint.

1600

The person who was apparently abused by the police department may not want to complain about his experience. He may feel the police were justified in doing what they did. But here it is. This bill would allow a third party to come in, a disinterested third party who observed, perhaps from across the street, perhaps from the window of his house or his apartment building and saw something happen. He may not know exactly what it was that did happen, but through this process he can launch a complaint. In that, of course, you can see that every complaint has to be looked at. Every complaint has to be examined. Every complaint has to be gone into in some detail. All that involves manpower, it involves time, it involves money, and all of that time, money and manpower is coming off the streets into a bureaucracy. I can't help but think that that is not going to increase the peace and safety that our citizens feel when they're on the street or in their homes or living in Ontario.

As you take policing off the street, as you tie them up in bureaucracy, you are doing a disservice to the law-abiding citizens and you're doing, I think, a service to those who would run amok of the law of the land. I think it would be more prudent to proceed with a pilot project, as I mentioned before, before committing the entire province to this expensive and somewhat major overhaul.

The government has also declared that the purpose of the legislation is to provide confidence in and respect for the public complaints system, yet the Attorney General noted when Bill 103 was introduced that according to a 2003 Stats Canada survey, more than 80% of the public say that they have confidence in our police—that's part of the old 80-20 rule, 80% are in favour or against and 20% are in favour or against, the society is split fairly—it's a major split when it gets to 80-20.

I mean if 80% feel that they're happy with the police force and happy with the policing services that they're receiving, that's a major win for the police department, and it certainly doesn't signal that a major overhaul is

needed. The system is seen to be in very good shape. It's a very small percentage of the public that would feel that the police are a problem. The major number of Ontarians would feel that the police are doing a wonderful job in maintaining law and order.

When you're getting that speeding ticket on the 401—for which you were probably guilty—you may not be very happy about it, but I think if you stop and think and take a deep breath, you'll realize that your speeding and driving habits perhaps were putting other people in jeopardy. The day after, or the next week, you will say, "Yeah, well, I guess I deserved it. I guess I better slow down a bit."

The current system has been in effect for almost 10 years and was developed through extensive consultation and outreach with a variety of communities, including police organizations, front-line police officers. Since 1997, police services have been responsible for the intake, investigation and adjudication of complaints. The independent Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services plays a role in reviewing police handling of complaints and hears appeals of police disciplinary hearings.

So in our current system, there's a civilian oversight to the police complaint system. I think that's the important thing. The police can't be expected to investigate their own complaints from ground zero. I think there has to be a civilian oversight to that, and if the civilian oversight is to audit the activities of the police investigative process, then I think that serves well. Again, I just don't hear an outcry amongst my constituents who would like to see this system overhauled.

If Bill 103 is passed, it will establish a new and independent police review director, the IPRD, who would be responsible for the intake and initial screening of public complaints. That's a new bureaucratic level. It would determine whether the complaint is investigated by the independent police review director, the IPRD—whether it would be investigated by them, the police service affected or whether it would be referred to another police service. Again, this is a new level of bureaucracy. Members of the public could still complain to the police service if they prefer, and third parties will now also be able to launch complaints provided they are direct witnesses to the alleged misconduct or have a direct relationship with the alleged victim. Again, they don't have to have that relationship to the alleged victim. They have to have been direct witnesses to the incident. Again, I think that's extremely controversial in that it opens up this complaint system to people who saw something but have no direct relationship to it. They may not have been close enough to hear the verbal conversation that took place between the police officer and the other person. But they may perceive something has happened.

I go back to the point where that is going to take manpower to investigate, it's going to take time, it's going to take money, and all of those three commodities are coming off the street where the public would be protected by the police officers. All of that time and money is



going into a complaints system, in a situation where the complaints system that we currently have, I'm not hearing any complaints about. So if you take these police officers off the street, if you take this money off the street, I think we're moving in the wrong direction. I think the policing money has to be on the street. That's where the bad guys are. That's where the police should be. That's where our efforts should be.

The Attorney General also claims that the new proposed system is not a return to the cumbersome pre-1997 system. However, the government is about to engage in an expensive overhaul of the complaints system without evidence that it will be effective. There's nothing in this bill that points to research, that points to studies done that say this bill will be effective; this bill will reduce the number of complaints the police have; this bill will make Ontario a better place to live in because we have a better complaints system. There's nothing there that says that. In fact, I would argue against the fact that there is anything in this bill that would make Ontario a better place. Ontario is a pretty good place now. I would say that this bill is going to take those resources off the street, take those police officers off the street. I don't know how that serves the law enforcement issue in Ontario when there are fewer resources that are going to be on the street, so I have great concern about that.

No one is opposed to civilian oversight. As I mentioned before, civilian oversight of the police complaints department is a very good thing. It should be there. It should be an audit activity. We heard a lot about auditing today in this House. An audit activity is probably a good thing. Auditing activities, whether they be through a minister's department that has obtained a high degree of controversy within the province, whether the giving out of grants to various agencies was a legitimate thing to do—the auditor is coming in to look at that. That's a good thing. How the auditor could do his job when the minister is still sitting in the ministerial chair—I don't know how that works. It's unprecedented in Ontario. I've never seen an auditor come in and audit a minister and his activities without that minister stepping aside. I think this is unprecedented in Ontario. I think it's an indication that this government doesn't really have the concept of what makes for law and order within this province. Certainly the balance would seem to be very much askew, that the minister is sitting in his ministerial chair while the auditor comes in and does an audit of his department on perhaps the wrongdoings of the minister. I hope the auditor finds that everything is in order. No one wants to see any member of this Legislature hauled down into disgrace. I hope the minister is found to have acted properly. But I'm not sure the auditor can do his job while the minister is still in his chair.

1610

**The Acting Speaker:** It's time for questions and comments.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I listened very carefully to the commentary on Bill 103 by the member from Halton. I'm amazed at his ability to dissect this

piece of legislation, to analyze it and to expose its incredible weaknesses, so I salute the member from Halton.

I'm going to be speaking in around eight minutes' time. I'm going to do my best to be exciting in my comments, to be vibrant in the way I address this bill. I'm going to be speaking for an hour. Here we are, late on a Thursday afternoon. It's a little warm in here, a little humid. You can get a sense of the smog factor outside there, up University Avenue. Members in the chamber are not quite dozing off, but they're subdued.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Kormos:** I'm pleased. I'm going to have some things to say about the parliamentary assistant. I'm pleased that he's here doing the heavy lifting. His minister just flits off—I didn't say "flicks off"; I said "flits off," because "flick" has acquired a totally new meaning. I'm blushing as I say it. This government has given that relatively innocent, innocuous word "flick"—like flick a piece of lint off your shirt. The minister has turned it into something vulgar and profane, downright course—base, if you will—and indeed, in the course of doing it, has diminished that great old Anglo-Saxonism that has been so useful to so many people in so many difficult and trying times as a mode of expressing so many things.

Give me eight minutes. I'll be back. Thank you kindly.

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** It's a pleasure to be able to say a few words on Bill 103.

Very briefly, before I make a few comments, I think the "flick" comment came from Richard Branson—now known as Sir Richard Branson, if I'm not mistaken—who helped create Virgin airlines and so on, and is involved in all sorts of other things.

Anyway, I just wanted to say that I've had a chance to be a part of the discussions on this bill. What it does is, it creates a new public complaints process. I guess it amends the Police Services Act. What I like about it is that it creates—this is from a recommendation brought forward by Chief Justice LeSage—an independent police review director.

I know that I've had people come to my constituency office, as probably many others have, who have had a complaint against the police. Oftentimes, they don't feel comfortable going to 41 Division in my riding or 42 Division, or to the police at all. They want to deal with an independent body. They think sometimes that the MPP can do something, that he or she can get involved in the process.

I feel more comfortable with the fact that this bill establishes an independent director. He or she can investigate the complaint that a person may have and then decide whether or not the complainant could go to the police or resolve the matter locally.

We're not saying here that the police are bad; we're not saying that anyone is bad. We're creating something that I think is much-needed.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further questions and comments? I recognize the member for York South—Weston.

**Mr. Ferreira:** I was expecting one of our friends from the official opposition, but I see there's only one here. He's been left to his own devices.



**Mr. Chudleigh:** I said it all.

**Mr. Ferreira:** He said it all, and I listened quite intently to his comments. He referred at least twice during his comments to his riding of Halton—that he has not received any complaints about the complaints process. Perhaps it's a by-product of different demographics, but I can tell you that in York South–Weston, in my short time as the member of provincial Parliament, I have received numerous complaints about police conduct. They tend to come from individuals from racialized minority communities.

It's safe to say that there is little doubt that the present system is flawed. So we have the government proposing this independent complaints body. We know that the government's bill would establish an independent civilian commission to handle the complaints or, in some cases, refer them to the police.

For this complaints body to be effective, it needs adequate funding. I have grave concerns that this government will indeed provide adequate funding. We know that on justice issues that affect marginalized Ontarians, their funding record is fairly flimsy. We hear about the lack of funding for legal aid; the system is just about broke. In this House yesterday, we heard comments about SALCO, the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario, which serves the fastest-growing minority community in the province, again not getting funding commitments beyond September. That's this government's record on funding these initiatives. I'm afraid that the funding for this particular complaints body will mirror the lack—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. Further questions and comments? The Chair recognizes the member from Scarborough–Rouge River.

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon (Scarborough–Rouge River):** I'm really pleased to provide a few comments on this particular bill, and I share with the members of the House—

**Mr. Kormos:** You've got to comment on Chudleigh's speech.

**Mr. Balkissoon:** Can you give me a second?

**Mr. Kormos:** You've only got two minutes now.

**Mr. Balkissoon:** That's right.

**Interjection:** You're on the clock, Bas.

**Mr. Balkissoon:** Don't interrupt.

**Mr. Kormos:** I apologize. I'm sorry. I regret having done that.

**Mr. Balkissoon:** I just want to add comments to the member from Halton, the member from York South–Weston and my colleague from Scarborough Southwest.

I spent a couple of years on the Toronto Police Services Board as a board member appointed by city council, and I've got to tell you that I, as a board member, was approached by people from the public on many occasions wanting to lodge a complaint on something they saw and they couldn't do it because the system didn't allow it. In several instances, I was able to get these people in to speak with the staff sergeant or superintendent of a particular division and actually resolve the issue.

The second thing I want to tell you that this particular bill will resolve is that there have been occasions of constituents of mine who wanted to make a complaint, and when they made the complaint at the local division, they would be talked out of the complaint by the local officer investigating the complaint. On top of that, they would be talked out of it, that it was frivolous and there was no substance to the complaint and then all the records are destroyed. So if the same officer was involved in a complaint over and over that was ruled as frivolous, all those records would be missing. This will solve it.

**The Acting Speaker:** It's time for a response. The Chair recognizes the member from Halton.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** I thank the member for Niagara Centre, who of course charged the government members to be alert. Lord knows: Ontario certainly needs more "lerts." The member for York South–Weston made some very knowledgeable comments on his experience in this area. He probably has a very good point: This may be a regional issue within Ontario. It may be needed in some places in Ontario, where it's not needed in others. Again, this government is waving its bureaucratic arm across the length and breadth of this province and trying to solve all the problems in the province with one bureaucratic response that perhaps is not necessary across the province. The cost of this program could be very much reduced. So I thank the member for York South–Weston for his comments.

1620

The member for Scarborough–Rouge River must learn that when the member from Niagara Centre starts to heckle you, you just carry on. Don't respond to him, or his heckling will get much worse. He will get much worse, and you will take much longer than the minute and a half you took to introduce the other members who spoke before you.

I know the member for Niagara Centre is very anxious to start his hour leadoff on this. I am anxious, of course, to hear his comments and also interested to see if his comments mirror my own concerns on this bill or whether the member for Niagara Centre will take a different tack—he's been known to do so—but he has always been known to be at least entertaining.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate? The Chair recognizes the member from Niagara Centre

**Mr. Kormos:** I've waited a long time for this. We're going back to 2005: Patrick LeSage delivers his report to the government. As a matter of fact, we can get a little more specific: It was April 22, 2005. I recall being at the press conference that Mr. LeSage gave downstairs when he released his report. I remember praising Patrick LeSage for some very hard work.

I remember urging the government to get on with it, because there were folks out there who were concerned about the effectiveness and objectiveness of the current police complaints system; there were folks out there who were concerned about access to the police complaints system—April 2005. This Attorney General didn't



introduce the bill until April 2006. Here we are in May 2007—over two years.

Do you understand what I'm saying, Parliamentary Assistant, through you, Mr. Speaker, of course—we've been chastised and hectored by the Chair for failing to deliver comments through the Speaker. Let me tell you, there have been more than a few occasions here when I wanted to drive things through the Speaker; make no mistake about it.

Here is an Attorney General—he couldn't organize a drunk-up in a brewery. He's got a comprehensive, complete report from LeSage in April 2005; LeSage dots the i's and crosses the t's for him, basically holds his hand and takes him right through it. It takes him over a year to bring the bill before the Legislature for first reading. Here we are, two years later—two years plus—and the government still can't get its act together. It's not very impressive, is it? Not very impressive at all. It's downright shameful. And this minister took his salary increase? For Pete's sake. It's incredible. Where's the gap? Where's the block? Does he have a problem with the Chair of Management Board? Is there a little personality conflict there? Does the Attorney General simply not carry clout in cabinet? He can't get his bills called. The government House leader is an amiable enough person: Mr. Bradley. You know that. The member from Peterborough is nodding his head. He knows the government House leader to be an amiable person. I say to you, I've never known Mr. Bradley, the government House leader, to carry a grudge. Was it the Premier who was less than enthusiastic about seeing this legislation become law? Was it? Is it one of the Attorney General's colleagues in cabinet who is blocking this bill? Is there personal competition? Are the potential leadership candidates already so viciously positioned that they'll do anything they have to to undermine a colleague who might pose a threat for potential leadership of the Liberal Party?

#### *Interjections.*

**Mr. Kormos:** Why, please. I hear, as others do, the increasingly competent French-language contributions by cabinet ministers who have been learning their lessons well. I compliment them. Private tutoring with very qualified French-language teachers, French as a second language. I hear ambitious ministers practising—not so much practising; rather, displaying, performing, their French-language skills. Clearly, like dogs marking out their turf, you have, metaphorically, cabinet members in this chamber lifting their hind legs and marking their spots in the ascension line-up. One suspects that the Attorney General has aspirations. One sees him as an ambitious politician. One sees him networking and building constituencies. By God, what could have been a more clever, downright Machiavellian political move than to introduce pit bull legislation? Think about it.

We're talking about somebody here who has a steel trap kind of political acumen and wants to wrap up a whole big constituency out there that will lend their support in the event of, let's say, a leadership race. Clearly,

the pit bull legislation was a strong marker. And hey, if you're going to ban pit bulls—and I note with regret the newspapers of this week. Do you recall the newspapers of this week reporting a savage pit bull attack on a mature woman and her little dog? What's going on? I remember as surely as I remember Mr. LeSage on April 22, 2005, releasing his report. I remember the Attorney General, in the same media room, in the same environment, with the cameras and the bright lights, and as svelte as he could be, looking straight into the cameras. We're talking about months of media training. Thousands of dollars spent on consultants so that the Attorney General could pierce that camera's lens with his glare. Do you recall what he said? See if you could recall what he said: "Pit bulls banned." Didn't he say that? You bet your boots he did. Pit bulls banned, huh? Tell that to the woman whose dog was attacked by, clearly, pit bulls that were poorly cared for, perhaps poorly bred and certainly poorly contained by their owners. So much for the pit bull ban. I guess the pit bull ban was just a lot of bull, wasn't it? Nothing more, nothing less. We said that at the time. We said, "Look, you're creating an illusion of safety, because the ban should be on dangerous dogs, badly bred dogs, badly-cared-for dogs, dogs that have been poorly or viciously trained. There's the Attorney General—"Pit bulls banned"—this Warholian bantam rooster: "Pit bulls banned."

1630

I suppose you wanted to top off a career as Attorney General by banning the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Do you remember that bill? We remember it well, only this time he was successful. The Attorney General of this province not only banned the Ontario Human Rights Commission; he dismantled it. The Attorney General abolished the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

The parliamentary assistant, interestingly enough, was sent out to do the heavy lifting on that one too. The parliamentary assistant was sabotaged. He was the victim of fragging. You know what I mean, don't you? He was the victim of fragging as his own troops shot him in the back—fragging. Long before Laurel Broten, the Minister of the Environment, ever thought of flicking, in military jargon, people knew about fragging. There he was, as capable a member of this Legislature as one could be, sent out with the commitment to hundreds of people in this province representing communities, constituencies, organizations across Ontario, promising them—the parliamentary assistant was sent out to promise them that they'd have their day in the committee. And he did it.

Look, the parliamentary assistant is a noble person. He's a person of integrity. He would fall on his own sword before he'd submit to instructions to lie. I'm proclaiming him an integrous man. I say to you once again, the parliamentary assistant would fall on his own sword before submitting to instructions to lie. He, the parliamentary assistant, believed the minister when the minister said, "Go out and tell these communities that they're going to have their day in the committee." They were



scheduled, and the advertising had gone out. Their times and dates and places had been confirmed. The parliamentary assistant took on the onerous task of facing numerous critics, but then his own troops shot him in the back. David Zimmer, member for Willowdale, parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General, succumbed to an incident of fragging during the course of public hearings around Dalton McGuinty's government's exercise in abolishing the Ontario Human Rights Commission. The government invoked closure. The clerk's office spent hours on the phone dialling people, saying, "I'm sorry, the committee's been shut down. No, I'm afraid the bill's been passed because it was a victim of a time allocation motion. The government has forbidden any further debate or discussion of the bill."

You see, we here in Canada think that those types of government edicts only occur in little Third World, despot-run dictatorships, don't we? We think that it only happens in the countries that are governed by the iron-fisted rule of tyrants, that a government could shut down discussion, forbid people to debate, and deny them the opportunity to be heard. Well, it happened right here in Ontario. It happened under this Attorney General's watch.

Yet ever faithful—ever, ever faithful. You know, I had a dog called Charlie—you know; I've mentioned him before—and God bless Joanne Bouchard, my neighbour, because she took care of Charlie while I was up here at Queen's Park. But I'd get home on a Thursday evening or a Friday morning, and Charlie would hear the truck pull into the driveway and he'd be darting out there, tail wagging—he was a beagle—just happy to see me. It only lasted 10 minutes or so and then he went back to what old beagles do, but he was faithful. Charlie, my beagle, was faithful. The parliamentary assistant has been faithful too, but I never shot Charlie and I never told him to lie.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Kormos:** Someone should provide some assistance to the parliamentary assistant. Look, I understand why he's emotional about this. I find myself, quite frankly, tearing up observing this kind of fidelity, especially by someone who's been abused so often, someone who's been set up, someone who's had a target painted on his back.

Does the Attorney General somehow think it's clever to do these sorts of things? Does the Attorney General somehow think he's making himself taller by doing these sorts of things? Does the Attorney General somehow think he's making himself bigger by forcing these things upon colleagues? Is it a control rush that he gets? I don't know. I'm not a psychologist. I'm not a therapist. But I do know that here he is again, the parliamentary assistant, unable to explain to us why his boss, the Attorney General, sat on the LeSage report for two years now. I'm not even sure it's going to get passed now. The New Democrats are going to do our best. Here we are, the third day of debate on this bill, and I've only gotten to my lead comments.

What is the government afraid of? The government, it seems, is walking in the constant shadow of scandal. Do you know what the government's like? You remember Joe Btfsplk in Al Capp's cartoon *Li'l Abner*, with the cloud over his head? Do you remember him? This government is like Joe Btfsplk. I know Hansard will introduce the correct spelling of Joe's last name. I apologize for the mispronunciation.

1640

This government is walking around with this perpetual dark cloud over its head and it somehow thinks it can escape the stench, the reeking stink of scandal by, three weeks after the fact, calling in the Auditor General. The minister doesn't even have the decency to step aside pending the review by that Auditor General.

Is the government, in the context of Bill 103, concerned about its failure to have incorporated oversight by the office of the Ombudsman? I remember I had occasion to say this. It has been so long ago because the government has been so reluctant to call this bill. I remember the investigation conducted by Arthur Maloney, here in the city of Toronto. I was a student at the time. I used to come downtown to watch the inquiry that he was conducting, that he was counsel for, into complaints against the city of Toronto police force. Some of the evidence was outrageous. It was atrocious. It was disgusting, some of the activities that were being complained of. Eventually, of course, we acquired a city-of-Toronto-specific police complaints process. In due course, it became a province-wide police complaints process. The effort and the first instances—because the real concern by those people who feel obliged to complain about police misconduct is that their complaints are inevitably being investigated by police. The concern is that the police—because of a unique, distinct police culture—may not be capable of objectively investigating other police; so this whole concept of a civilian complaints process. The member from York South—Weston—and he'll be speaking to this bill, in due course, in his own right—talked in his community about the fear, an apprehension, the trepidation that some people have in going to a police office, a police station, to complain about the conduct of a member of that police force. What? They have to walk past that officer on the way to the desk sergeant to make the complaint? One understands the hesitation that a person in those circumstances might have when compelled to rely upon the police to investigate the police.

Of course, during the 1990s, the latter part of the 1990s, police oversight was dramatically altered. I remember that debate, being on that committee, those dramatic amendments to the Police Services Act, among other things. Here we have the LeSage report. Mr. LeSage, I've got to tell you, hasn't, at the end of the day, offended anybody. But of course when you offend nobody, you risk offending everybody. Mr. LeSage did not address, because he wasn't asked to, but his failure to address in no way, in my view, constituted an adoption or an acquiescence to the government's position.



Cover your back, Mr. Parliamentary Assistant, the Attorney General is here.

The issue, of course, as raised by our Ombudsman, André Marin—

**Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale):** Your Ombudsman.

**Mr. Kormos:** “Our Ombudsman,” Mr. Zimmer says. Our Ombudsman.

He’s the Ombudsman of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. He’s non-partisan, objective, fair, even-handed, the overseer of injustice, of the failure of governments and government agencies to serve the people well. We saw the Ombudsman react promptly to concerns around corruption in Ontario’s lottery and gaming industry—the government-run, government-owned lottery and gaming industry—to wit, the ticket sales.

Let me tell you this: There is one minister over on the government side who is oh, so grateful to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. He’ll never be able to express his gratitude. I mean, he’s just overjoyed. There’s a minister over there on the government side who is just ecstatic that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration stole the spotlight, and that is the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

It’s a bizarre thing. You go outside—I know that the member for Halton has seen this—and at the end of question period the press gallery is camped outside the government lounge doors, where government members exit, unless of course they take coward’s alley. I’ll explain coward’s alley to you in just a minute. So the press gallery is camped out there—the TV cameras, the radio reporters, the newspaper reporters—for the scrums, when they question first, usually, ministers and then opposition party counterparts’ critics. I was amazed at how addictive those scrums can be for some people, because there were several days into the inquiries around the slush fund of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration—his mishandling of those funds, his failure to account for those funds and the prospect of political back-scratching taking place—when the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal would still pause as he exited the government lounge doors, knowing full well that the press gallery is there to administer a root canal, but perversely hoping that the cameras might run for him just another 30 seconds. But of course that wasn’t to be. The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal had his 15 minutes of fame, or notoriety—hell, Bonnie and Clyde got darn near a century now—and the focus moves on.

**Mr. Ferreira:** Who’s next?

**Mr. Kormos:** “Who’s next?” my colleague from York South-Weston interjects.

Who knows? I mean, the Premier’s office never anticipated—well, they tried to shut down the CTV investigation. Was it CTV? Yes, it was CTV or CBC.

**Mr. Ferreira:** CBC.

1650

**Mr. Kormos:** The CBC’s investigation into improprieties in the lottery and gaming system. They hired spin doctors. We were getting close, we were drilling hard,

but then, of course, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration dropped his own stink bomb, created his own stench, when we discovered that this government was not just about ripping off innocent lottery ticket consumers but was also big time into paying off political intimates with untraceable monies from the end-of-the-year slush fund. Didn’t we find that out, Speaker, huh?

Does the minister resign? No. Does the government call in the Auditor General? Yes. And there’s speculation about why the government, why the Premier chose today. Well, I say this to you: Surely the Premier’s office has heard the same scuttlebutt that we’ve heard, that the Ombudsman may well have been prepared to start investigating what happened during the course of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration’s shovelling of money. He was signing cheques and never bothering to see who the payee was. Oh, that’s hyperbole, but I say to you metaphorically, he was signing blank cheques: “Let the president of the Liberal riding association decide how much it’s for and who it’s going to be paid to. How much do you want?” The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration’s probably suffering from carpal tunnel from all the cheque signing. Poor guy’s going to come in here—carpal tunnel is not funny; it’s not funny at all. It’s a very, very painful thing, you know that. But here the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration is risking his own carpal tunnel, never mind his soul—but we’ll stick to material things, carpal tunnel for the moment—with all of that cheque signing. It was an orgy of cheque signing. It was a flicking orgy of cheque signing.

Of course, a subtext during all of this was the \$500,000 of hard-earned taxpayers’ money spent on the Ministry of Environment’s incredibly stupid Flick Off campaign. I can’t show you the photo that I have here—the Sergeant at Arms has seen it because he’s seized it from me several times—but this photo is wallpaper on computers across the province and beyond.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: As enthralling as this wonderful speech is, I do believe we’re speaking about the bill that’s on the order paper to be discussed, and the tradition of this place is to speak to that bill. I’ve been patient trying to see how our good friend from Niagara Centre is going to weave this into the bill. I haven’t heard it yet, and I’d love to hear it.

**The Acting Speaker:** We are debating Bill 103, member for Niagara Centre.

**Mr. Kormos:** Thank you kindly, Speaker. I say to the member from Brant, hold on to your flicking horses, we’re getting there. So I have—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Kormos:** Hey, I didn’t write the script. Some wise guys in a downtown Toronto ad firm or wherever they are got paid half a million dollars. I’ve got the photo and I can’t—it’s about oversight. Some wise guys at some ad firm got paid half a million—again, I don’t know who wrote that cheque—to put the Minister of the Environment in front of a backdrop that has large letters spelling out “flick” and the lower left-hand corner of the L, rather than a 90-degree acute square is curved as if it



were the left-hand part of a U and the base of the L extends rightward so that it almost meets the I. So it appears to be the letter U.

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Standing order 23(b)(i) that my colleague from Brant just quoted does refer to the matter under discussion, and however entertaining this semantical diversion is, which also brings to mind the analogy of perhaps “puck,” it doesn’t address the matter under discussion, whether it be the Flick Off campaign or a promotional puck, perhaps we could discuss Bill 103.

**The Acting Speaker:** We are debating Bill 103, member from Niagara Centre.

**Mr. Kormos:** Darned right I am, Speaker. I’m debating Bill 103 as hard as I have ever debated any bill in this chamber, because we’re talking about oversight. We’re talking about a government that denies the people of Ontario oversight in so many areas, 103 included.

Here’s the Minister of the Environment standing in front of this backdrop with the huge lettering behind her spelling “flick,” f-l-i-c-k, a five-letter word, but the L and the I are designed to be a U, which turns it into a four-letter word. The minister’s head is placed right where the base of the L would intersect with the I, so that we have that huge portrait of the Minister of the Environment in front of a large tableau that spells f-u-c-k behind her head, and she’s actually got a smile on her face, whereas she should be disgusted that she was being made a party—

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth—Middlesex):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I know one of the other Speakers who has been in that chair recently said that you cannot spell something that you cannot say in this House. That would be unparliamentary.

**The Acting Speaker:** I think that’s fair for the member to say. Member from Niagara Centre, we’re debating Bill 103.

**Mr. Kormos:** Okay. I appreciate that. I can say “flick.” The minister can say “flick off,” and the minister can—Sergeant at Arms, please—stand in front of a sign that appears to have her standing—look, don’t blame me. I’m only reporting the facts, for Pete’s sake. It’s incredible. I thought the government was trying to desensitize people to those course obscenities. Was it Linwood Barclay who anticipated what the catch phrase might be for the Minister of the Environment’s windmill campaign? Imagine what sort of cute commentary that kids might identify with that could be attached to a windmill campaign.

But André Marin says—and please bear with me. Unlike some of the other people here, I didn’t go to expensive schools. I come from small-town Ontario and the Latin in the church was taken away when I was but a child. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* Get up on your point of order now, pal. All of a sudden—

**Mr. Delaney:** On a point of order, then, Mr. Speaker: The standing orders are explicit that the debates must be conducted in either of the two official languages recog-

nized in Ontario, and as much as I still do remember some of my church Latin, it isn’t one of those languages. 1700

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Niagara Centre, we are debating Bill 103.

**Mr. Kormos:** “*Quis custodiet ipsos custodies*” is the title of the speech that André Marin gave, expressing concern about this government’s incapacity, it’s inability, to include ombudsman oversight in Bill 103. Surely, my friend from Mississauga West, whose mother is going to be very happy when she gets the Hansard—and I understand—would share my concern about a government that can spend half a million dollars on “Flick you” campaigns, a government that can stall and delay calling in the Auditor General until it hears rumours about the possibility that the Ombudsman—they’re only rumours. I don’t know if there’s any basis to them whatsoever. Did you hear the same rumours, Speaker? You didn’t hear them. Maybe I just heard them from somebody who had heard them from somebody else. That’s how rumours happen. That the Ombudsman was going to be conducting his own inquiry. I understand that that would motivate the Premier. That would be big-time motivation. It would be a motivator. It would motivate him more than one of those pink Mary Kay Cadillacs ever motivated anybody. That would be motivation.

The prospect of the Ombudsman—that’s the whole point. It’s not as if there’s a whole lot of paper to look at, because there is no paper. There isn’t exactly a paper trail, and that’s been a concern of opposition members. It’s a concern of opposition members that Bill 103 denies Ontarians—folks that you all represent—denies them, takes away from them, deprives them of recourse to an ombudsman should they feel that the proposed police complaints system has not treated them fairly.

And nobody’s talking—ever did, ever was, ever will—about an ombudsman function that somehow is going to be yet another level of appeal. There are, I suppose, three types of ombudsmen. First, on behalf of a constituent, I dealt with the ombudsman for Great-West Life insurance. What a fraud. It’s a joke. It’s pathetic. It’s an embarrassment. That person doesn’t deserve to call herself an ombudsman. She’s an embarrassment to the title, Great-West Life insurance, because her performance of her job of ombudsman was to refer the matter to the branch that had made the decision that I was grieving, if you will, on behalf of the constituent.

Let me tell you what happened. Can I? A constituent buys a Dodge truck down at Rose City Dodge Chrysler on Highway 58. As a matter of fact, Dennis Hull was one of the original owners. I remember going to the grand opening, on the right side, going southbound on your way to Port Colborne, just before the Toyota dealer. He goes there and he buys a Dodge pick-up truck, brand new. He buys life insurance on it. Prudent. There’s financing. The financing is done through Chrysler Finance. Everything’s all done in the same operation. The insurance policy is Great-West Life. This young man died of one of those tragic, premature heart attacks. He was only 41 or 42. He



has a three-year-old daughter, a baby. His only heir. Of course, when he dies, he dies intestate. I think you lawyers call it that, when you die without a will. Am I being accurate here? He dies without a will. A 41-year-old man doesn't expect to die.

The family is scrambling to be named the administrator. Is that what you call it when you're an executor and there's no will? The lawyers here might be able to help me. As I understand it, you've got to go to court, you've got to apply, and you've got to get a district court judge—or a Superior Court judge, they call them now—to give you the letters to act as an administrator, and that takes time. Nod if I'm correct, Mr. Zimmer. Yes, Mr. Zimmer is nodding.

In the period of time that that took place—the same dealership that sold him the truck also sold him the life insurance policy and also arranged the financing. It's through Chrysler financing, right? No payments are being made on the truck during the eight weeks or so that his sister is applying for appointment as administrator of the estate. These guys come and seize the truck. They know he died because the sister told the car dealership. She said, "My brother died and I'm scrambling to be made administrator." The car dealership said, "Don't worry. There's life insurance on the financing." They seize the truck and then sell it—you know how that works—and they give her the \$1,200 that was netted in the sale of the truck, as a seizure on a defaulted finance plan, rather than paying for the whole truck, which had a value of \$45,000. Do you see what happened? There was still money owing against it. They actually made a \$1,200 profit when they sold it. So a \$45,000 truck goes and they give her \$1,200 for the three-year-old kid.

I say that this is outrageous. Do you think it's outrageous? Everybody knows what's going on here. It's all the same player.

I see that Great-West has got an ombudsman, so I write to the ombudsman. What does the ombudsman do? The ombudsman sends the file to the department that sells these policies and says, "This is how I conduct myself as an ombudsman." You can imagine the language that I was tempted to use. Had it occurred later, after the Minister of the Environment's publicity stunt, I could have perhaps been more creative, but I was more old-fashioned, I suppose. Now, that's a stupid ombudsman. It's pathetic. As I say, she shouldn't be allowed to call herself an ombudsman. But an ombudsman can perform that court-of-last-resort role. In the retail and in the banking sector, ombudsmen often do that.

I would prefer that more, even private sector, ombudsmen function as our provincial Ombudsman does. His job, rather than so much being yet another level of appeal, is to investigate and make determinations about how the process did or didn't work for a griever, a complainant, internally as they're going through the system, because if you can't change the system, then you're just going to keep repeating the same mistakes over and over again. That's the role that the Ombudsman anticipated playing with respect to Bill 103.

It has been of incredible value to the people of this province to have an effective Ombudsman, yet the McGuinty Liberal government has tried to silence, cripple, shut down and head off the Ombudsman every step of the way. What this Liberal government can't do through the front door, they'll do through the back door. They'll defund, underfund and hijack the Ombudsman process, because they don't seem to have much good to say about the Ombudsman. They don't like the Ombudsman. They don't have any interest in letting him do anything for parties who are mistreated or treated unfairly in a police complaints process.

Let's understand, it's not just the civilian complainant; it's the police officer about whom a complaint is being made as well. Why shouldn't that police officer—if she or he feels that they were treated unfairly in the police complaints process, by the process itself—be able to go to an ombudsman? What? Do you want them to spend a fortune on hiring high-priced lawyers, friends of the Attorney General, his Bay Street buddies? Should a police officer have to spend all of his or her life savings hiring a lawyer to go to—where is it you go?—divisional court, or you go to all these obscure court places that cost you a fortune at the end of the day?

**1710**

This government refused, this government defeated, amendments to the bill that had as their effect the inclusion of the Ombudsman in the system, because the bill specifically excludes the Ombudsman. You see, were it not for the specific exclusion in the bill, in the statute, the Ombudsman, by his very mandate, would be entitled to function in a position of oversight with respect to this body, wouldn't he? You know that. You know this case.

So the government specifically, particularly, with full knowledge of what it was doing, says, "The Ombudsman shall not be available to anybody who gets screwed over in this process."

That's not very fair or just, is it? That's why this has been a difficult road for the parliamentary assistant to travel, because he's not only an integrous person; he's a just person. As the Premier is so wont to say, "I feel his pain." The Premier wrings his hands and says, "Oh, I feel your pain." "Oh, autistic children in your families? I feel your pain," the Premier says. "Oh, more workers who have lost their jobs? Oh, I feel your pain." Perhaps ODSP people with disabilities struggling, literally struggling to stay alive—"I feel your pain."

Well, I've got a feeling that the voters of Ontario have got some pain that they propose to inflict come October, because it's not enough just to mouth the words.

Tomorrow afternoon, Jim Bradley and I are going to be at the CAW hall—Local 199 in St. Catharines—talking about the industrial job losses across Ontario. Brother Wayne Gates. CAW has lost a whole lot of sisters' and brothers' jobs, not just in the auto sector; in foundries, in steel, all sorts of them—150,000 manufacturing jobs lost in the last three years. I was down at the Steelworkers' convention in Niagara Falls two weekends ago, talking to those sisters and brothers. They were in the largest—



because they were the old rubber workers, you know, the rubber division of steel. There is one. They've suffered the biggest chunk because, of course, they tend to be auto supply, auto parts manufacturers.

That hockey puck ain't going to sustain them through the hard times. It's places like GDX down in Welland, the rubber weatherstrip for car window frames—that's what they've got to be able to build. But when the auto sector is going to hell in a handbasket and we've got governments cutting deals with places like Korea so that we can ship more of our manufacturing to Korea, when we've got a Premier on a South Asian junket with his entourage of who knows how many, at a cost of how much, talking about what? Exporting to South Asia? We're going to export to South Asia. We'll export a whole lot more of our call centre jobs when they become the jobs of last resort in a whole lot of towns, a whole lot of cities across this province. They're exporting those now.

It's funny. When I told the Minister of Infrastructure Renewal about some of the job losses down in Niagara, he talked about how that's okay, the government will retrain them to work at the casino. I said, "No, you don't get it, Minister, because just yesterday I was telling you about how the casino is laying people off. What are you going to retrain those people to do now? They already lost their jobs in the foundries and in the steel mills and in the manufacturing plants, and you trained them to be blackjack dealers. Now they're losing their jobs at casinos. What are you going to train them for now? They're not going to start performing down the road at the ballet-opera company." Think about it: 150,000 jobs in the last three years. When they've been replaced, they've been replaced by what the Liberals used to join us in calling McJobs.

So I hear the government say, "Oh, I feel your pain." Is that what it's going to say to the victim of a flaw in their police complaints process? Is that what they're going to say to a police officer who has been screwed over? "Oh, I feel your pain." To a civilian complainant? "Oh, I feel your pain." There's no rationale. Of course, the Liberal bench and the committee got its script of the Coles Notes, if you will—large print, maximum two-syllable words, illustrations as indicated, with bullspit about, "We don't need another level of appeal." What an absolute distortion of the truth. Can I say that? Tell me if I can't. Just let me know.

An absolute distortion of the truth and pure, unadulterated bullspit: that somehow including the Ombudsman would create a top-heavy model that would provide an extra level of appeal and would cause the litigation to go on forever. What a stupid, stupid, stupid thing to say—moronic—because we know that that's not the function of Ontario's Ombudsman; never has been. The Ombudsman's job is to address systemic failures and to encourage bodies, organizations to correct their own shortcomings when it comes to those areas.

Do you want to know something else? Totalitarian countries don't have ombudsmen; they don't. The role of

ombudsman originated in Sweden, right? The role of an ombudsman is unique to democratic countries. It, many say, is indeed an indicator of democracy, where the incredible power of the state that can be so crushing, so oppressive and so overwhelming, can be tested by one person through the office of an ombudsman.

Now, here's a government that talks a big game about democratic renewal, yet it won't allow people, be they complainants or respondents in their new police complaints process, to access an ombudsman, the ombudsman being a clear indicator of democracy. As I say, you know what? You go to Libya, there's no ombudsman. You go to North Korea, no ombudsman. You go to the People's Republic of China, guess what? No ombudsman. You see, totalitarian countries restrict people's access to that sort of office that, as I say, has the capacity to protect people from the overwhelming power of the state, from the tremendous and weighty power of huge, impenetrable bureaucracies. There isn't a person here who doesn't know what it means to have to deal with one of those because you do it on a daily basis on behalf of your constituents. Sometimes we have trouble in our offices getting these huge bureaucracies to yield. And we expect folks out there who don't have the resources that we have to do it on their own?

1720

The Attorney General flicked up again. There's no other way to put it. First pit bulls, then the abolition of the Human Rights Commission, and now a modest reform to the police complaints process with some restoration of civilian oversight—and not relying upon any recommendation of LeSage, let's make that clear. He never suggested for a minute that there should be no Ombudsman. He didn't comment on the issue; he wasn't asked to. So don't try to tell people that he did, directly or indirectly either, because the government wouldn't allow him to attend before the committee. Remember that? There was a motion inviting LeSage to the committee. The government voted it down.

So here we go. The Attorney General—another lost opportunity. When he enters that leadership campaign, I don't know what he's going to brag about. The person who's going to have the bragging rights is Mr. Zimmer, because he's the one who had to bear the brunt of it and do the heavy lifting and attract and suffer the scorn of the public.

**The Acting Speaker:** Time for questions and comments.

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** I listened intently to what the member for Niagara Centre had to say and I agree with very much of it. He's much more knowledgeable in these areas of justice and the laws and the courts and access to justice than I am. I guess my question is where he left off. I know this comes out of recommendations from Justice LeSage. I know the Attorney General is a big fan of Justice LeSage, and Justice LeSage is a very honourable person. But in my 17 years here, we've not had a lot of complaints and people coming forward—at least not to justify this huge



bureaucracy and the millions of dollars you're going to spend—wanting to replace the SIU.

Now you're going to set up a new independent police review director, regional offices, all kinds of new staff and bureaucracy. I just don't know where the impetus for this is really coming from when I read constantly that the people of Ontario have great confidence in their police, when people are surveyed at well over 80%. That's more confidence than they have in their politicians, I can tell you that. The police do a good job.

In fact, there's a good quote from John Tory when he was asked about this. He called the Liberal's efforts with regard to this bill unnecessary:

"The police, in the vast majority of cases, at all times and all places, have been doing a good job," Tory said.

"Most of the public are satisfied with the way in which these matters are resolved." That was in the Windsor Star on April 20.

I think you've got a bigger problem. People come up to me—and we have backlogs in the courts. In Collingwood, you can't get divorced without it costing you a fortune because things are remanded and remanded and remanded. We don't have enough justices of the peace. People are very, very angry at this government for the way they've treated victims of crime and not having access to the fund. We all pay surcharges on our tickets so that victims of crime can be looked after. So I think you have bigger matters than Bill 103 to deal with, and why exactly you're doing it, I have my suspicions.

**Mr. Ferreira:** Mr. Chair, I know, watching the reaction on your face, that you enjoyed that exhaustive and comprehensive presentation from the member for Niagara Centre as much as I did. As a new member, I always find it a real treat to sit here and listen. The member brings a great deal of institutional memory to this place and he has this innate ability with rhetorical flourish, and I commend him very much for it.

He mentioned the delay. We know that Chief Justice LeSage came forward with his recommendations, 27 recommendations in all, back in April 2005, more than two years ago. Where was this government in the intervening 25 months? They could have advanced the recommendations that Chief Justice LeSage put forward in a fairly speedy and efficient fashion but they chose not to. We've seen other examples of this, and not just with Bill 103 but with other pieces of legislation, where all of a sudden, faced with a clock that's winding down on the term of this government—we're now five months away as of today—here they are, trying as quickly as they can to get stuff passed under the wire. Unfortunately, it's the people of Ontario who are left to suffer.

I mentioned in my earlier interjection that in my riding I have heard from a number of constituents who have been victimized by the lack of an effective, valid complaints process. That's unfortunate. This government has chosen not to act earlier, and I say they will be held to account on October 10.

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce):** I'm very pleased to rise and speak to Bill 103. Just for the people

who are watching, I think it wouldn't hurt to talk just for a second about what Bill 103 is actually about. It's An Act to establish an Independent Police Review Director and create a new public complaints process by amending the Police Services Act. Just so that the general public that is watching it have the ability to understand what that means, it's the option, it's allowing another opportunity, if one wants to choose a different route in which one would bring forward a complaint or work through the process. What I want to talk about just for a minute is that, to me, this reinforces what the McGuinty government is about: transparency, accountability and consultation.

*Interjection.*

**Mrs. Mitchell:** I know that the member across the way wants to talk about his beagle, but I'm going to talk about Bill 103.

There was extensive consultation. My friend the member from Niagara Centre across the way, in a quote, also spoke about specifically—he called His Honour Justice LeSage's report a tremendous effort. That effort was through the consultation process, and the recommendations that are coming forward are based on that report. So when we go out and talk to the people of Ontario, we bring forward what was missing from the process. We understand that that's what they were looking for, and these are the recommendations that came forward. In no way do I want to raise any concerns. Some 80% of the Canadian public say that they have confidence in our police force, so that's a part of it. But what they were looking for was another opportunity.

**Mr. Delaney:** It's always a pleasure to come up with a two-minuter on my colleague from Niagara Centre, who never remembers my riding name although I never forget his. One can easily see why, because one has the opportunity in this Legislature of hearing at length, and very often, from the member for Niagara Centre, who quoted from time to time from this keynote address by André Marin, our Ontario Ombudsman, referring in Latin to the title, "Who Will Guard the Guards Themselves?" It certainly brought to my mind some of the church Latin that I learned, as did the member during, likely, his high school days. It certainly speaks ipso facto about the quality of the education that we probably both share. In many cases, in a two-minuter here, this offers the opportunity for a quid pro quo comment in which you can offer something in response to what has been said. It certainly also reminds me in fact of the motto of this place, "Audi alteram partem," which of course means, "Listen to the other side." When it comes to my colleague from Niagara Centre, if one defines him as being on the other side, we as members have an extensive range of opportunities to listen to and to hear from him. That also brings to mind the phrase "Caveat emptor," which means "Buyer beware," which one may or may not say, depending on your point of view, may apply to the dialogue from the member from Niagara Centre.

Speaker, it's been a pleasure to comment on his comments, and I thank you for the opportunity.



1730

**The Acting Speaker:** The Chair recognizes the member from Niagara Centre in response.

**Mr. Kormos:** I'll repeat it: Mr. LeSage did some formidable work. It was the government's response to his work that was a pathetic letdown and a miserable parsing of his report.

The member for Huron-Bruce wants to know why I'm inclined from time to time to talk about my Charlie, my beagle, now dead. Why does this place make me feel compelled to talk about Charlie the beagle from time to time? I'll tell you why. Charlie never lied. Charlie never stole money. Charlie never tried to conceal and bury dishonest conduct. Charlie never said one thing to my face and another thing behind my back. Charlie never lied to the people of Ontario in the course—

**Mr. Delaney:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Even in a comment, that constitutes unparliamentary language.

**The Acting Speaker:** The Chair cautions the member from Niagara Centre.

**Mr. Kormos:** Thank you. I should [*Inaudible*] a dog who was always honest and never lied, a dog who would have felt so out of place here in this chamber.

For the member for Huron-Bruce, she's probably got the whip's office slapping her wrist as we speak for using the word "accountable" today, of all days, when it took three weeks—we're sitting over here hollering for the nurse to please administer some novocaine because we're drilling and drilling and the government, notwithstanding that, only today decides, after three weeks of drilling, to be even marginally accountable.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship):** I thought this discussion was about Bill 103, and I really appreciate this opportunity to talk about Bill 103.

I was listening to the member from Niagara Centre. I have to say he's a great debater when he talks about the issues, but today I don't know what he was talking about. He talked about everything other than Bill 103.

I would like to start off by recognizing Minister Bryant and my colleague David Zimmer for the all hard work they have put into this piece of legislation. I'm glad at least the member from Niagara Centre is here so he can see what this bill is all about.

This bill, if passed, will create an independent civilian body to administer the police review system in Ontario. I want to stress two words: It's "independent" and it's a "civilian" body.

The McGuinty government believes that Ontario deserves a strong and independent police review system that is fair and effective. I don't think anybody will argue that we need a fair and effective system, which is fair to both civilians and the police.

This bill is another step forward in providing Ontarians with greater openness, transparency and accountability, by creating a new system that would be fair, effective and transparent—

**Mr. Kormos:** Like your slush fund?

**Hon. Mr. Takhar:** —in the way public concerns about the police are handled.

At least, Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about Bill 103. I'm not talking about everything else that the Niagara Centre member talked about in his one-hour speech.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Takhar:** Yes, very good.

I know that my constituents in Mississauga Centre are very receptive to—

**Mr. Berardinetti:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: With the greatest of respect, I can't hear the speech from the minister. It's very difficult to hear when the continuous interruptions of—my friends here to the right continue to heckle. If you could please ask them to lower their volume a little bit, I would appreciate it.

**The Acting Speaker:** Has the Minister of Government Services completed business with the House leader? Have you finished your business with the opposition House leader? Okay; that's good.

I want everybody in order here so we can listen to the Minister of Small Business.

**Hon. Mr. Takhar:** I know that my constituents in Mississauga Centre—maybe not in Niagara Centre, but Mississauga Centre—are very receptive to any measures that promote greater openness, transparency and accountability. I know these new measures will make it easier for people to have their concerns addressed and ensure that people know and understand that there is a way to hear their voices.

Our government's goal has always been to create a police review system that has the confidence and respect of both the public and the police. That's why we want to make sure that it's a transparent process and is being managed by a civilian body which is independent.

Our main objective is to improve and strengthen the way concerns about the police are dealt with. Our goal is to foster trust and respect for the system and to strengthen relationships of confidence between the police and the public. Our proposed legislation will do just that. If passed, this bill will provide the public with a significant new option for bringing forward their concerns while ensuring that there's no interference with the good work done by Ontario's police services in keeping our communities safe.

Our government is committed to being tough on the causes of crime. I know that many people in my community are concerned about crime, as are hard-working people around this province. I hear these concerns day in, day out, and I know that keeping our communities safe is our priority—and it should be the priority of all members, including the members of the third party, I hope. To combat crime in our communities, we need to work together and give our police forces the resources they need to keep our communities safe and secure. It means ensuring that our police forces have everything they need to combat crime, including organized crime and gun crime. It also means providing the public with significant new standards of police accountability that would increase the community's faith in the police and lead to



increased co-operation between the police and the public and ultimately increased public safety for all Ontarians. At the same time, it would ensure that there's no unnecessary interference with the excellent work done by Ontario's police services in keeping our communities safe.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize and thank our police forces and our police officers for their tireless and courageous efforts in keeping our communities safe and secure.

1740

When I was the Minister of Transportation, I had the privilege to work very closely with the police forces across this province. I want to tell you that our police forces play a very critical role in keeping our highways moving and keeping them safe, while at the same time keeping our communities safe as well. I'm very proud of the work that our police forces perform across the province. I had the great opportunity to work with the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services and to attend very many functions of the police forces to recognize their great efforts.

Ontarians deserve to feel safe and be safe. That is why the McGuinty government has been working to put about 1,000 more police officers on the streets of our communities. That means more police officers will be patrolling our streets.

Last January, we announced \$51 million in new funding to fight gun crime and gang violence. We have expanded the anti-guns and gangs task force, which includes several police services such as the Toronto Police Services Board, the OPP and a team of specialized crown prosecutors. We have instituted mandatory gun-shot wound reporting, gun amnesty programs to get weapons off our streets, blitz inspections of gun-licensed businesses, and a strengthened witness protection program. We have called for stronger statutory measures to combat gun crime, including mandatory minimums for certain firearm offences and reverse onus on bail for those accused of a gun crime.

Our government's hard work is paying off and our communities are safer, our law enforcement agencies are stronger and Ontario is stronger as a result of the work we have done over the last three and a half years. Today we continue to make a positive step forward in keeping our communities safe and increasing the communities' faith in the police by establishing a police review system that is both equitable and effective for all. I would like to take this opportunity to ask all members of the House to support Bill 103 so that all Ontarians can benefit from having a significant new option in dealing with police complaints that would be fair and transparent.

The essence of this bill is to establish an independent civilian body, and the key words again are "independent civilian body." To me, this system will ensure a fair, equitable and effective system both for police forces and civilians. This bill will create more openness and more transparency and it will make our police forces more accountable so that people can have access to an inde-

pendent system which both the police forces and our civilians can rely on. This is what I have been hearing from my constituents in Mississauga. I think this bill is going in the right direction and we should really support this bill.

**The Acting Speaker:** Time for questions and comments. The Chair recognizes the member from Simcoe-Grey.

**Mr. Wilson:** I didn't understand why the Minister of Small Business kept taking shots at the member for Niagara Centre. He knows more about this stuff than most of the people in this House and he's got a fairly grassroots approach to it.

I thought the government would explain, because in my last questions and comments I really wanted to know the need for this legislation. I'm not aware that the Special Investigations Unit is doing a really bad job and that you have to spend up to \$9 million or maybe more—that's the guess—on a new bureaucracy that will have regional offices for police complaints. As the studies show, at least 80% of the people of Ontario have great confidence in their police forces. The SIU, I think, has been doing a good job. The deputations that I have—there are several here that I've been reading through from various police forces throughout the province—feel rather insulted by this legislation. They agree, of course, with oversight—everybody agrees with that—and they agree with complaints processes. But they do wonder why the Liberals think they're doing such a bad job. And I wonder too, because the complaints that I get are: There are not enough justices of the peace. There's not enough access to justice under your government and probably previous governments, but it seems to be getting much worse. There are not enough judges and there's certainly not enough court time, civil, family and criminal, in the courts that my constituents have access to closest to home. There just aren't the resources there at all. Legal aid is a problem and it's always a problem. The \$9 million could be well-spent in that area. You have money in a victims' fund that people seem to have a real access problem with. Victims of crime seem to be ripped off in this province and we just revictimize them. Again, someone explain to me why we're taking up such time for this when I think the current system's working.

**Mr. Kormos:** I want to comment very specifically on the comments made by, Harinder Takhar, the Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship. Of all the days in the history of this government that he chooses to talk about the government's accountability, he picks today. After three weeks of being hammered by newspapers across Ontario about the lack of accountability by your colleague, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and his slush fund of millions of dollars, you stand up today and read this prepared text that talks about how this government's accountable? That was written six months ago. It's no longer valid. It has reached its expiry date. That can of soup is spoiled and not fit for human consumption. It has to be disposed of in an appropriate way. Of all the days that you pick, Minister, to talk about



transparency, when you've been hiding from the scrutiny of the Auditor General. Your Premier has been getting hammered and your colleague, the Minister of Citizenship, doesn't have the integrity to step aside while his ministry is under investigation by the Auditor General. But then, what should we expect? You were found guilty of a violation, of breaching the Members' Integrity Act. Breaching it. You didn't even give us a half-hearted apology, never mind demonstrate—

**Hon. Mr. Takhar:** I did.

**Mr. Kormos:** Well, then, apologize again and mean it this time. You thought that you got away with it. Rather than do the honourable thing and step aside as a minister, you simply stepped down into a non-ministry. It's pretty difficult to take from Liberals any comments about honesty, integrity, transparency or accountability when you've been slush-funding and sleazing to no end, for who knows how long.

**Mr. Berardinetti:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I wanted to take this opportunity—and I can't find the exact section right now—but I wanted to point out that, as Speaker today, you have done an exceptional job of keeping this House—

**Mr. Kormos:** It's standing order 14.

**Mr. Berardinetti:** It's standing order 14, my friend from Niagara Centre tells me. That has to be quite the memory. I just wanted to say that you've done a great job of keeping this House in order this afternoon. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I listened to the wonderful analysis that was provided of Bill 103 by my good friend, the Minister of Small Business, who's doing an excellent job. He talked about small business and its impact on the economy in Hawkesbury and in Cornwall this week. I had the opportunity to be there, and he did a superb job.

But let me say, when it comes to supporting police services in the province of Ontario, I look to the Minister of Corrections and Community Safety, Monte Kwinter, who's done an outstanding job in supporting police services in Ontario, along with the Attorney General, Michael Bryant.

*Applause.*

1750

**Mr. Leal:** They deserve to be applauded for their work with police services to make sure that Ontarians are safe.

Let me get to the bill here, 103. I'd just like to say—I'd like to certainly congratulate the chief of the Peterborough Lakefield police service, Terry McLaren, a good friend of mine—he does an outstanding job—and the chair of our police services board, who's a unique Canadian, Dr. Tom Symons. Dr. Tom Symons, of course, was the first founding member of Trent University in Peterborough, received the Order of Canada and now he's volunteering his services to chair the police services board in Peterborough.

We're certainly thankful that a man of Dr. Symons's integrity would take on such a volunteer position and

provide outstanding leadership for the direction of that police services board.

Justice LeSage, who's one of the great jurists and legal scholars, not only in Ontario but throughout Canada, provided a number of recommendations for this investigative independent police review. We appreciate that this bill—Bill 103—is incorporating the recommendations that were made by Justice LeSage. I note that this bill will set the standards for an independent investigation not only to respect the integrity of our police services, but certainly those individuals who think that something may have gone askew with a police force have the opportunity to be there, have their complaint looked at and determined whether it should go forward—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. The Chair recognizes the member from Haliburton—Victoria—Brock.

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton—Victoria—Brock):** I'm pleased to provide some comments today on Bill 103, An Act to establish an Independent Police Review Director and create a new public complaints process by amending the Police Services Act.

I want to also commend all the police officers we have in my riding. It's a large riding and they do a great job on a large geographical basis.

It was mentioned about Tom Symons today—a very honourable gentleman whom I've known over the years—and his great contribution to Trent University.

The speaker before me, the member from Simcoe—Grey, mentioned access to justice. I know that many of us in our communities have had the Ontario Bar Association—we've co-hosted with them—to do town halls and to hear about the problems with access to justice. A lot of points were highlighted there. Legal aid was brought up. There are a lot of community services—mental health, crown attorneys, a lot of different community groups—that came forward and highlighted the fact that there are not enough justices of the peace out there, and that is blocking access to justice. The system is so complex.

This bill is brought forward. I know that when it was originally introduced in April of last year, our leader John Tory commented in the Windsor Star that, "The police, in the vast majority of cases, at all times and all places, have been doing a good job. Most of the public are satisfied with the way in which these matters are resolved."

So, we're just wondering if this is another level of bureaucracy. We certainly all want checks and balances, but for the majority of their part, the police do a good job.

I want to say that I have my Senators pin on, and we recognize Mike Fisher from Peterborough. Go, Sens, go.

**Mr. Berardinetti:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: My apologies for interrupting; I usually don't do this. I was looking in the standing orders and I couldn't find the section regarding the Speaker, but I did want to say one thing. I was here all day today, and I don't think anybody mentioned that this Sunday is Mother's Day.

So, for all mothers out there, I wanted to say happy Mother's Day. I know my mother is at home watching,

and I wanted to wish everyone's mother a happy Mother's Day, this Sunday, May 13. I believe there is a standing order for that too.

**The Acting Speaker:** That is wonderful. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Small Business.

**Hon. Mr. Takhar:** The member from Simcoe–Grey said that I was taking a shot at the member from Niagara Centre. Actually, what I said was that the member from Niagara Centre is a great debater when he actually focuses on the issues. But again, he didn't really focus on the issues. All he wanted to talk about was—to take shots and shots and shots. That is what he wanted to do. Maybe this time he really didn't read the bill and couldn't say anything about it.

I do want to say that my colleague from Peterborough actually did speak about the bill, and also the member from Haliburton–Victoria–Brock did speak about the bill. I want to say that I agree with her: The police force in general is doing a very good job. I said that when I was the Minister of Transportation; I had the chance to work with them. They are basically responsible for keeping our roads and our highways safer. It is because of their results that for three years in a row, we have been

declared the safest region to drive, in Ontario. I really want to thank her for pointing out that the police boards are doing their job.

This bill is creating an independent civilian body. It is important for us to have an independent civilian body to address the complaints of civilians. But at the same time, we wanted to make sure that this was a fair system for the police force and also for the civilians, so their issues, if they have any complaints, can be addressed in a fair manner by an independent civilian body. If there is an independent civilian body, I think it's a step forward for this province.

I really want to congratulate Minister Bryant and also MPP David Zimmer for doing such an excellent job of bringing this bill forward. This is a great day.

I also want to take this opportunity to wish a happy Mother's Day to all the mothers who are doing such a great job.

**The Acting Speaker:** It being very close to 6 p.m. of the clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday, May 14, 2007, at 1:30 p.m.

*The House adjourned at 1756.*



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Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

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Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

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**Monday 14 May 2007**

**Lundi 14 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 14 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 14 mai 2007

*The House met at 1330.*

*Prayers.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** You may recall the September 9, 2004, announcement when the Minister of Community and Social Services decided to eliminate over 2,000 jobs in Orillia, Smiths Falls and Chatham by 2009. The city of Orillia and area are losing 700 jobs and a \$29-million payroll with the closing of the Huronia Regional Centre. Imagine evicting some of the most vulnerable people in our society just so that she could receive a standing ovation from an agency organization that stood to gain nothing financially. Well, we can now be assured that the announcement was a failure, as family organizations and ministry staff have been handcuffed by a mean-spirited and cruel closure process.

But now, that same minister is responsible for economic development and trade. Perhaps she can explain to the Legislature who she is going to try to blame for the loss of 13,000 manufacturing jobs in Ontario last month. Will it be Stephen Harper, George Bush or maybe Mike Harris, who, by the way, created a million new jobs when he was Premier.

The city of Windsor is now close to a 10% unemployment rate. Perhaps the city fathers could meet with the minister in between her global junkets to find out just what Dalton McGuinty and his minister are doing to preserve the good, well-paying manufacturing jobs here in Ontario.

We know that business leaders have lost faith with the scandals that haunt the Liberal government. We know that business leaders see no business plan to help them. They only see more red tape, an erratic and undependable electricity sector and skyrocketing taxes that are driving jobs away. We are now the stalled engine that is dragging down the other provincial economies.

### ANN DICKER

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** On Saturday, May 5, the North Bay community lost a beloved member of our community. Ann Dicker passed away peacefully at North Bay General Hospital at the age of 92. Over her lifetime, Ann had made an incalculable impact on our community by sharing her gift of music so generously

with so many. Ann was one of North Bay's most well-known musicians. She gave musical performances for seven decades and was the organist for several years at Calvin Presbyterian and Trinity United Church. She played the piano for Sunday school children up until one year ago.

As a member of the North Bay Rotary Club since 1937, Ann was a member of the Rotary Songsters and played the piano for Rotary meetings each and every Monday for 70 years up until about six months ago. She was the recipient of the Paul Harris Fellowship.

Ann's radio program, *Wings of Song*, was broadcast live on CFCH radio in North Bay for 16 years. She is also remembered for delivering tapes of her music to shut-ins for many years. In 1998, a scholarship fund was created to honour Ann's contributions to music. In 2004, Ann was inducted into the North Bay Musicians and Entertainers Hall of Recognition.

Today we remember an irreplaceable member of the North Bay community. As Bruce Goulet, Arnie Schmidt, Herbie Brown and Ralph Diegle of the North Bay Rotary Club all expressed to me on Thursday, she was one of a kind. We will be forever grateful for the invaluable contribution she made to our community, and she will be deeply missed.

### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** April was not a good month for Ontario's economy: 38,000 people lost their full-time jobs; 38,000 people lost their benefit packages; 38,000 people lost their pride and their dignity; 38,000 people will no longer be receiving their paycheques; 38,000 families are left scrambling to make ends meet.

The Liberals will tell you, "But not to worry; we gained 21,000 new jobs in April." What the McGuinty Liberals won't tell you is that those 21,000 new jobs are part-time jobs, jobs with lower wages, jobs without benefits, jobs that will leave families scrambling to make ends meet.

Many of those 38,000 jobs were included in the 13,000 jobs lost in the manufacturing sector, an area of the economy that has eroded steadily since the McGuinty Liberals took over the reins of the province in 2003. According to Statistics Canada, Ontario has lost 137,000 manufacturing jobs since the beginning of 2005. That's 137,000 good-paying jobs gone out the door, just like the McGuinty Liberal slush fund.

Ontario now finds its unemployment rate at 6.6%. That's well above the national average and amongst the



most unemployed provinces. Windsor is the city in Canada with the highest unemployment rate.

While Dalton McGuinty and his ministers litter Ontario with feel-good announcements about the economy and job creation, Ontarians are forced to sit and watch Ontario—once the proud engine of job creation in Canada—diminishing into a part-time economy.

#### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South–Weston):** I rise today to express my dismay at the lack of support for quality public transit displayed by the McGuinty Liberals. Because of this government's inaction, we continue to see inadequate GO train service along the Georgetown corridor. All the communities along this corridor, from Georgetown and Brampton to Weston and Mount Dennis in my riding—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Member for Halton.

I need to be able to hear the member for York South–Weston. That means everyone else should be quiet.

Member for York South–Weston.

**Mr. Ferreira:** All the communities along this corridor, from Georgetown and Brampton to Weston and Mount Dennis in my riding of York South–Weston, remain underserved by too few overcrowded GO trains each day. This lack of access to good public transit is a severe impediment to the economic and social welfare of these communities and the residents along the corridor. Faced with this pressing transportation problem, what do the McGuinty Liberals do? Do they unbundle the proposed GO train expansion environmental assessment from the assessment for a privately owned, publicly subsidized high-speed Blue 22? Do they unbundle the assessments in order to more quickly and efficiently meet the public transportation needs of tens of thousands of Ontarians along the Georgetown corridor? Absolutely not.

It is high time that the Liberals recognized the vital importance of publicly owned and operated transit for the social and economic well-being of our communities. The neighbourhoods and residents along the Georgetown corridor deserve a government truly committed to meeting their transportation needs. They deserve better. As I am proposing this coming Thursday, the Liberal government should move quickly to unbundle the proposed GO expansion from the Blue 22 air-rail link so that communities along the Georgetown corridor can benefit from improved public transit sooner rather than later.

1340

#### CITY OF OTTAWA

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans):** I rise today as the proud member of Parliament for Ottawa–Orléans. Today, as John Tory spends his time explaining his party's legacy of cuts and neglect to the city of Ottawa, I

am proud to be part of the government that has put Ottawa back on the map at Queen's Park. In this year's budget alone, our government has invested \$60 million in one-time funding to the city of Ottawa. Since 2003, our government has provided \$150 million to support the city of Ottawa's bottom line—new dollars.

The leader of the opposition is in Ottawa today, and although he voted against the budget, he has yet to criticize any of these investments. I'm hoping that he will use his time in Ottawa to tell residents which of these investments he doesn't like.

Some of the investments Ottawa received in the budget include over \$46 million from the public transit trust for infrastructure, over \$6 million as Ottawa's share of the housing trust fund and \$2 million for the 2009 World Junior Hockey Championships, to be held in Ottawa.

As a former municipal politician, I know that this government and Premier McGuinty have made a concerted effort to reverse the downloading and divisive politics that the previous Tory governments engaged in. We've uploaded \$9.4 million in land ambulance costs and we've uploaded public health costs to the tune of \$4.4 million. The Premier said it best today in his letter to the Ottawa Citizen: He loves Ottawa and it shows in the investments the McGuinty government is making to improve the lives of all residents in our beautiful capital city.

#### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** Over three weeks ago, Dalton McGuinty had an opportunity to act like a leader and call in the auditor to investigate the political slush fund. He didn't. He had an opportunity to show respect for the tax dollars given to him by hard-working Ontarians. He didn't. Over the last few weeks, we've asked 286 questions about the slush fund and we've asked repeatedly for McGuinty to call in the auditor. We tabled a motion in public accounts to have the auditor investigate, but the Liberals voted it down. Newspapers across the province called for the auditor to be brought in. We wrote him a letter and asked him to launch an investigation. It took three long weeks before McGuinty finally did the right thing. It went on so long that the Toronto Star called him "Stonewall McGuinty," which raises the question, why now?

Did it take that long for McGuinty to realize the slush fund was wrong? Does it take that long for polling to come in? If McGuinty is finally admitting that something is wrong, why didn't he ask the minister to step aside during the investigation? Is he going to wait for another month to do that? It is easy to be a leader when times are good, but it is when there is a problem that true character shows through. Maybe Ian Urquhart was right when he wrote on Friday that "McGuinty has left stains on his Boy-Scout image that may still be visible on election day this fall." The people of Ontario will not forget how their tax dollars were treated with lack of integrity.

## CERTIFIED MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANTS

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri (Etobicoke North):** It's a pleasure to rise and offer a warm welcome to the representatives of the Certified Management Accountants of Ontario who join us in the Legislature.

The CMA profession includes 20,000 members in Ontario alone, and 47,000 members across Canada and internationally.

As accomplished financial professionals, CMA accountants are involved in every region of the province and in every sector. They provide strategic business advice and lend their financial service expertise and leadership to small, medium and large organizations. They're also found in all areas of the broader public sector, including the Ontario public service and, of course, even amongst MPPs here.

Today is the third annual Queen's Park advocacy day for CMA Ontario. Groups of CMAs will be meeting today with MPPs and government officials to talk about some of the major issues affecting the management accounting profession in Ontario and across Canada. Of course, it would not be a traditional CMA Ontario Queen's Park day without the reception for all MPPs and interested participants.

A number of CMAs have travelled from ridings across Ontario to be here today to let us know how they are making a difference in our communities. I would invite and encourage each and every member of this House to attend the CMA Ontario reception, which will be in the legislative dining room from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., so that we too can learn about the CMA and its issues.

Once again, welcome to them all and congratulations on their continued contribution to the province of Ontario.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** Our government believes that every Ontario family should have a safe, healthy and affordable place to call home. Unlike the previous government, which ignored Ontario's affordable housing needs, the McGuinty government is making progress. We established a comprehensive, affordable housing strategy that is making a real difference in the lives of working families and Ontario's most vulnerable households.

The McGuinty government has invested \$392 million to help low-income households secure affordable housing across this great province. These new investments will achieve our commitment of 35,000 housing allowances and bring us close to our goal of 20,000 new housing units.

In places like Peterborough and Ottawa, we can point to the results. In Peterborough, that means \$15.82 million for the following: \$14.86 million for rental and supportive units, \$243,000 for home ownership units and \$72,000 for 50 units related to the provision-of-housing

allowances/rent supplements. In Ottawa, the first wave of the new Canada-Ontario affordable housing program will provide that city with approximately \$30 million, including \$22.05 million for 315 rental and supportive units, \$2.02 million for 232 homeowner units and \$5.76 million for 400 units related to the provision of housing allowances/rent supplements.

We've also created the strong communities rent supplement program, providing municipalities with a long-term funding commitment of \$50 million over 20 years. That's \$1 billion for rent supplements to assist low-income households across Ontario. The rent supplement program is now helping over 6,600 families.

## INFRASTRUCTURE DES TRANSPORTS EN COMMUN

### TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell):** Je me lève aujourd'hui pour parler des choses importantes qui se passent à Ottawa, et de l'engagement du gouvernement McGuinty à améliorer le transport dans cette région.

Since 2003, the city of Ottawa has received over \$520 million for transit, highway infrastructure and municipal roads and bridges from the provincial government. Within that funding, we have committed over \$365 million for the city of Ottawa to support public transit because we know it's vital to give commuters and transit users alternatives to get around. We also know that it is very important for our local communities to receive a hand up from the province in terms of important infrastructure projects. Through the Ontario Infrastructure Projects Corp., small communities are able to borrow money for roads and bridge investments at lower rates and under better terms.

The leader of the official opposition is in Ottawa today, where he will undoubtedly try to hide from his party's record of eliminating all support for public transit and forcing the cost of local services on to cash-strapped municipalities. He has even admitted the damage that his party caused and had this to say: "The previous PC government's failures include downloading without adequate preparation and consultation with municipal leaders and without sending"—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

## VISITORS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd just like to welcome here to Queen's Park a group of students from Jackman school, in my riding.

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South–Weston):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to welcome to the House today two great volunteers at the Syme 55+ seniors' centre in my riding: Edith George and Penny Tweedle.



## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 161, An Act respecting employment agencies / *Projet de loi 161, Loi concernant les agences de placement, the title of which is amended to read, "An Act respecting temporary help agencies / Loi concernant les agences de placement temporaire."*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON JUSTICE POLICY

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on justice policy and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 165, An Act to establish and provide for the office of the provincial advocate for children and youth / *Projet de loi 165, Loi visant à créer la charge d'intervenant provincial en faveur des enfants et des jeunes et à y pourvoir.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON SOCIAL POLICY

**Mr. Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward–Hastings):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on social policy and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 171, An Act to improve health systems by amending or repealing various enactments and enacting certain Acts / *Projet de loi 171, Loi visant à améliorer les systèmes de santé en modifiant ou en abrogeant divers textes de loi et en édictant certaines lois.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH  
WEEK ACT, 2007LOI DE 2007 SUR LA SEMAINE  
DE LA SANTÉ MENTALE DES ENFANTS

Ms. Horwath moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 223, An Act to proclaim Children's Mental Health Week / *Projet de loi 223, Loi proclamant la Semaine de la santé mentale des enfants.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** The bill basically proclaims the first week in May of each year as Children's Mental Health Week. We know that that was last week; I wasn't here to introduce it at the time. But the bottom line is that members will know how important children's mental health issues are and how much this province needs to dedicate to those issues. By keeping it as an annual week's commemoration, we will keep that at the top of mind as being an important thing for this Legislature to put its mind to.

## VISITEURS

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell):** Je voudrais souhaiter la bienvenue à notre pasteur de la paroisse Très-Sainte-Trinité de Rockland, qui est avec nous aujourd'hui accompagné de Rhéal Filion: le pasteur Morin, qui cette année a reçu le Prix du patrimoine Roger-Bernard pour la désignation patrimoniale de l'église Très-Sainte-Trinité et du presbytère de Rockland.

## MOTIONS

## HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move that notwithstanding any other order of the House, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, May 14, 2007, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number 354. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1353 to 1358.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Balkissoon, Bas  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Bentley, Christopher  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bountrogianni, Marie  
Bradley, James J.  
Broten, Laurel C.  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Caplan, David  
Chan, Michael  
Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Dombrowsky, Leona

Duguid, Brad  
Duncan, Dwight  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Fonseca, Peter  
Hoy, Pat  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Kular, Kuldeep  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Levac, Dave  
Marsales, Judy  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McMeekin, Ted

McNeely, Phil  
Mitchell, Carol  
Parsons, Ernie  
Patten, Richard  
Peters, Steve  
Phillips, Gerry  
Pupatello, Sandra  
Ramal, Khalil  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Smith, Monique  
Takhar, Harinder S.  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Wynne, Kathleen O.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Chudleigh, Ted  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Ferreira, Paul  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Horwath, Andrea

Klees, Frank  
Kormos, Peter  
Marchese, Rosario  
Martiniuk, Gerry  
Miller, Norm  
O'Toole, John

Prue, Michael  
Savoline, Joyce  
Tascona, Joseph N.  
Witmer, Elizabeth

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 45; the nays are 16.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### POLICE WEEK

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** Ontario is privileged to be home to the finest assembly of police officers to ever serve any citizens anywhere in the world, so it is an honour to rise in the House today and recognize the beginning of Police Week in Ontario.

The theme for Police Week 2007 is "Safer Communities for a Stronger Ontario." I'd like to thank Chief Terry McLaren and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. The association has once again risen to the occasion, partnering with the government to develop an appropriate theme for Police Week. Their input is always valued and their assistance is greatly appreciated.

Ontario's communities are safer and our province is stronger because of our excellent police services and a government that tirelessly supports the challenging job that they do. Ontario's communities are safer because the government promised to put 1,000 more police officers on the street under our Safer Communities—1,000 Officers Partnership program. I'm proud to report that 999 officers have been hired as of May 2007, and all 1,000 officers will be hired by the end of this govern-

ment's mandate. Half of these new officers have been assigned to high-priority areas such as youth crime, organized crime and domestic violence. When combined with the community policing partnership program, which the McGuinty government continues to support, we are now investing \$68 million every year in perpetuity to help Ontario municipalities employ an additional 2,000 police officers.

Police Week is a time for communities in Ontario to connect with their police services. It's a time to show gratitude and a time for reflection. We pause and say thank you to those brave men and women who have served and we honour those who serve still, and hopefully we can inspire a new generation of Ontarians to one day answer the call. But lest we forget, it is a time when we also pay tribute to those courageous and dedicated police officers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

Since 1970, Police Week has been observed in May to coincide with International Peace Officers Memorial Day on the 15th. Ontario's annual ceremony of remembrance takes place on the first Sunday in May. On that day, Premier McGuinty and I met with some of the families of fallen police officers and attended the ceremony at the Ontario police memorial. There are few experiences that are more moving than to be standing in the midst of a sea of blue and scarlet as police officers from across Ontario come together to remember and to pay tribute to lost colleagues.

Sadly, three more police officers were killed in the line of duty in 2006. Their names have been inscribed onto the memorial wall of honour. They are Constable John Atkinson of the Windsor Police Service, Constable Donald Doucet of the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service and Constable David Mounsey of the OPP Huron county detachment.

The names of three other police officers that historical research tells us were killed while serving their communities have also been added to the wall: Constable John R. Davey of Cornwall, who was killed September 6, 1892; County Constable Albert C. Springstead of Wentworth, who was killed November 29, 1919; and highway traffic officer Miles Campbell of Ottawa, who was killed on June 9, 1929.

More than 160 years ago, Sir Robert Peel, the founder of modern policing, said, "The police are the public, and the public are the police." The McGuinty government is committed to a police service that reflects both the gender and cultural diversity of the province. We applaud community-driven recruiting initiatives such as OPP Bound and the Ottawa Police Services' award-winning community outreach recruitment program. These initiatives are successfully reaching out to members of the community who may not have considered a career in policing.

What better way to bring police and the public together than Police Week and the many events and celebrations planned for cities and towns throughout Ontario? I'm looking forward to attending as many of



these events as possible to meet the front-line police officers who keep our neighbourhoods safe and to look into the faces of excited young Ontarians who dream of following in their footsteps.

Policing is a noble profession, bound in duty, honour and service. I invite the members of this House to join me in saluting the thousands of fine women and men who wear the uniform. I hope that all members will use this week to deliver a message to their communities of the individual service these police officers perform on all of our behalf.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I'm very pleased to respond to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services on behalf of our leader, John Tory, and the members of our caucus as well.

To begin with, I would like to thank all the police services and all the police officers in the province of Ontario who put their lives on the line day in and day out to make sure that we live in a safe and secure province. Of course, one thing I would agree with the minister on is that there are no finer police services than we have right here in the province of Ontario.

I am involved myself in a number of police service events this coming week. One thing that I thought was one of the more humorous types of events was one that's being held Saturday in the city of Orillia. We have a community-based police officer who works with all the organizations in the community; his name is Constable Gerry Dwyer. Constable Dwyer has arranged to have the Stanley Cup at the Orillia Square Mall and at the Orillia detachment of the OPP on Saturday. The humour is that Constable Dwyer says, "The Toronto Maple Leafs have been trying to get the Stanley Cup for 40 years in Toronto, and on my first try, I brought the Stanley Cup to Orillia." Gerry is very, very proud of that.

The minister referred to the police memorial. Of course, many of our members were there that day: Mr. Miller; Mr. Klees; our leader, John Tory; and myself. We met literally hundreds of the men and women in blue who were present at that service. It was a touching event as we paid tribute to the lives of those men and women who have given their lives for the people of the province of Ontario.

The minister also spoke about the 1,000 police officers program. In one way, I applaud them for delivering on that promise, but I can tell you, it was the work of John Tory and our caucus that put the pressure on this Liberal government day in and day out. All you have to do is go back to the Time for Action report, which laid out the final details of what a John Tory government would have done. Of course, a lot of that followed on the terrible murder of Jane Creba. For the first two years of this government's mandate, they did nothing but announce and reannounce those 1,000 cops. It was John Tory and caucus members Bob Runciman and myself that put the pressure on. I can tell you, it has not gone unnoticed, I'm told day in and day out by police services across the province, who thank us for our efforts in putting pressure

on this government to have one election promise that they actually come through on. And we still haven't seen them all, because our friends in the Ontario Provincial Police are shy of officers. That is the next step: We have to make sure that the OPP have many more officers than they have today.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Dunlop:** You know, it's incredible. You come up here, you stand, you do your best on a statement, and someone is heckling away over there. I didn't say one thing when the minister was making his comments, yet the heckling goes on and on because we keep talking about broken promises. The reality, I will say again, is that the 1,000 cops would not be on the street without this opposition right here today and John Tory and the pressure he put on the government.

1410

Another thing we should not forget when we're talking about Police Week is the way the Ontario Provincial Police have been left like the meat in the sandwich at Caledonia. They've been left to take all the pressure while this government, including the minister and the Premier, have failed at even one attempt to make an appearance at Caledonia and pay respect to the police officers who are on the streets. I would ask that the minister and the Premier follow in the steps of John Tory and take a visit to Caledonia. Maybe do it this week, in Police Week, where there are 124 police officers on duty, trying to do the best they can to protect the people of Caledonia. As I say, they've felt like the meat in the sandwich for this whole 450 days.

Mr. Speaker, as I wind down here, I want to thank you for the opportunity to respond. Again, I want to thank all the police officers in the province of Ontario for the fantastic job they do. They put their lives on the line day in and day out so that we can live in harmony and peace in the province of Ontario. Good luck on Police Week. I would encourage all my colleagues to get out and talk to their police service this week and do some events with them. You'll find some great people out there, the men and women in blue.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I'm pleased, on behalf of New Democrats here at Queen's Park, to respond. I tell you, we join with others in applauding and thanking and expressing sincere gratitude to police officers, women and men who on a daily basis risk their lives to keep our homes secure and our families safe.

I come from Niagara region, and we are unique in that we have four police services policing us there. We have the RCMP, the Ontario Provincial Police, the Niagara Regional Police and of course the Niagara Parks Police. We see, as a border community, the incredible pressures on police that are unique as well to border communities, like so many other parts of Ontario. We also see the incredible pressure that's put on police forces that are in high tourist areas, where the populations rise dramatically during summer months, for instance. We, the New Democrats, want to join in mourning and paying tribute to the tragic loss of three police officers during the course



of last year: Constable John Atkinson, Windsor; Constable Donald Doucet, Sault Ste. Marie; Constable David Mounsey, Ontario Provincial Police, Huron county.

But I say to this government that it knows, notwithstanding all of the platitudes contained in the minister's statement today, that police services across this province are still hard-pressed to deliver core services, the very basics, the very bottom-line type of policing. Increasingly, as organized crime and illegal drug activity get driven out into smaller-town Ontario, smaller communities which haven't been gifted with gangs-and-guns funding, we find police services hard-pressed, when they can't even deliver core services, to address exceptional circumstances that contribute to the fear, lack of safety and lack of welfare for people in those communities.

I say to the minister that he should go to the ridings of Timmins-James Bay or Kenora-Rainy River and take a look at how hard-pressed police services in some of the smallest, most isolated communities in this province are to deliver any services. I'm talking about one-person, two-person, three-person police forces, police forces that are so under-equipped, so understaffed, that the risk they put themselves in is compounded directly as a result of them being ignored and simply overlooked in the course of day-to-day supervision by this government, policing activities here in the province of Ontario.

Askov in our courts still is a cloud over the criminal justice system as we continue to see cases being stayed or dismissed because of delays in prosecution.

We call upon police officers to perform some of the most dangerous and complex work in this province, and we expect them to somehow maintain a morale when they see charges laid after lengthy, difficult and sometimes dangerous criminal investigations tossed out because the government won't adequately fund crown attorneys and provincial courtrooms to ensure that there's progress through the criminal justice system in a timely way.

Quite frankly, this government has to accept responsibility for the failure to fund legal aid meaningfully in this province, and that's very much related to the effort that police put into an investigation. The fact is that an understaffed, under-resourced, underfinanced legal aid system constitutes a serious impediment in its own right when there is an effort on the part of crown attorneys to prosecute cases. And again, it creates delays, it creates difficulties and problems that the government has ignored in the address today regarding police officers and in its budget earlier this year.

All of us know that police officers are not just active as persons performing their policing duties, and I join the minister in paying tribute and thanking the chiefs of police. I also thank the Police Association of Ontario and those rank-and-file police officers out there, the ones in uniform slugging it out on our streets. These police officers are not just performing policing duties. Inevitably, in any community you go to, they're out there coaching

hockey, doing minor sports through the summer months and the winter months.

Down in Niagara, for instance, the Niagara Regional Police Force has adopted the Special Olympics. On Sunday, May 27, they'll be down at the Auberge Richelieu on River Road with a pig roast and barbecue, raising money for the Special Olympics. I look forward to joining them then.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and it concerns his portion of this government's \$4-billion unbudgeted, unplanned slush fund. Previously in this place, when ministers have found themselves under a cloud or being investigated, they have done the right thing and they've stepped aside until that investigation is complete. This minister is under precisely such a cloud. He and his actions are under investigation by the Auditor General at the request of the Premier.

My question is simply this: Will the minister agree to step aside until such time as the Auditor General has returned his results of the investigation into his actions relating to the slush fund?

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I have repeatedly said in this House that we are extremely proud that in the last couple of years we have invested in newcomers like never before. We have expanded programs for bridge training for foreign-trained doctors, nurses, dietitians and social workers like never before. There's much more work to do, because every year 140,000 willing newcomers come to Ontario. It's my job to continue to help them and work with partner agencies to help them. That's what I'm going to continue to do.

**Mr. Klees:** My question was not related to the good work that his ministry does. It does relate, however, to the fact that he is currently under investigation. I would like to read a quote from Dalton McGuinty when he sat on this side of the House:

"They knew" they were in "trouble on Thursday, the minister didn't resign until Monday afternoon, the privacy commissioner wasn't called until Monday afternoon, so that leaves plenty of time ... for damaging evidence to be tampered with." December 11, 1996.

This government knew they were in trouble three weeks ago, and they stonewalled and they resisted and they answered no questions. That leaves three weeks for important information to be tampered with.

I'm going to repeat my question to the minister: Will you do the honourable thing and at least step aside until such time as the Auditor General has had an opportunity



to investigate the minister's actions and return a decision?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** It's clear that the provincial auditor is doing the review of the year-end grants, and he is doing his work. Meanwhile, there's still an incredible amount of work to do in this province, whether it is to help our newcomer communities integrate into jobs or get settlement services or get their fair share from Ottawa. These are the ongoing jobs that have to be done and they continue. There is an unending need for help for newcomers, volunteer organizations, investing in diversity. That's the kind of work that needs to be done and I'm doing it. I'm proud to continue to do it because it's work that not only helps the newcomers, but helps this province prosper and everybody feel better and be part of this great province.

1420

**Mr. Klees:** The minister would have us believe that there's no one else in the Liberal caucus who could carry on his work while he steps aside as this investigation takes place. Surely there's at least one member there who could step into the gap.

The Bengali cultural centre: \$250,000 to a group with a member of the Liberal Party on the board, thanks to federal Liberal MP Maria Minna's organization of the meeting. That was the work of this minister. The Iranian-Canadian Community Centre received \$200,000 from this minister: seven directors, seven Liberal donors, four recipients of patronage appointments. That's the kind of work that this minister did when he was overseeing the slush fund.

Even the Premier recognized that that looked suspicious and ordered the Auditor General to investigate the actions of this minister. So I'm simply asking, will the minister do the right thing, respect the office of his ministry and step aside until the investigation is returned?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** We're proud of the investments that we've made in organizations big and small, organizations like the Folk Arts Council of St. Catharines Multicultural Centre and the India Rainbow coalition. There is SISO in Hamilton, which is challenged by the fact that it is not only a place of original settlement but there's secondary migration settlement coming to Hamilton. There's now increased migration of immigration into York region and Peel region. We are making investments in those regions, in the community centres, because there's a great deal of demand for those services that for many years were ignored. These are proud investments that had to be made, are being made, and we're going to continue to do that work.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.

**Mr. Klees:** My question continues to the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship and concerns the slush fund over which he continues to preside even though he is under investigation by the Auditor General. For three weeks this minister stonewalled, refused to answer questions. For three weeks he continued to say that there was no need for the Auditor General to investigate his

actions. Now his Premier disagrees with him. His Premier agrees that his actions are suspect and called in the Auditor General. Notwithstanding the fact that he insisted for three weeks that there should be no investigation, the Premier was forced to call that investigation. So once again, I'm asking the minister to explain to this House why he should be held to a different standard from other ministers who have stepped aside while they were under investigation.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** The review is taking place by the Provincial Auditor and his work will continue. As I said, there are many unending jobs to do. Whether you look at the new loan program we've established—many newcomers come here without a cent in their pocket because their life savings went to get here to Canada. When they come here, if they have to take a course or have to buy some books, they have no money. We've set up a loan program for each newcomer who is internationally trained to get a little bit of seed money so they can pay for books or pay for a course. That's the kind of work that I'm continuing to do and believe strongly in.

**Mr. Klees:** Once again, we are not doubting the good work of his ministry. We are doubting his involvement with overseeing a political slush fund through which he doled out money without an application process, and ignored people in this province who had serious needs and who didn't even know about the slush fund's existence.

The question that he continues to sidestep now, as he did the question about whether the Auditor General should investigate, is simply this: He is under investigation. His actions have been called into question by his own Premier by virtue of the fact that the Premier agreed to ask the Auditor General to investigate. Why will he not stand in his place, do the honourable thing and say, "I will step aside until such time as the unanswered questions about my conduct have in fact been answered by the Auditor General"?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** Our government is investing about \$140 million every year in helping newcomers, in programs like the international medical graduate program. We invest more in helping foreign-trained doctors than any other province. We have an ESL program that's now got a full, robust curriculum. We now have bridge training programs for dietitians, for veterinary doctors, for social workers and for pharmacists. These are the investments we are making, and then we have our investments in our settlement program. As a province, we invest \$140 million. We also were successful in getting the federal government to invest in Ontario for the first time after 20 years of neglect of Ontario.

**Mr. Klees:** Anyone watching these proceedings will note that the question that is being put is all about the integrity of this minister and his respect for the office that he holds. To every question that I put that deals with his integrity and his responsibility to step aside while he is being investigated, we get nothing but an encyclopedic listing of the good work of his ministry. That is not the question.



The question is his conduct, and it is simply, this one final time: Minister, why will you not respect the office you hold and step aside until such time as your actions have been fully investigated, and until this House and the public have the answers to the unanswered questions that continue to call your integrity into question?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** As I said, the Provincial Auditor's review is taking place. I would also say to the member opposite that I am very proud and passionate about the work I've done and continue to do. I am very honoured to work alongside partner agencies, big and small, who have felt the pain of all our newcomers, especially those who haven't met success in Ontario. I'm very proud of the fact that I have listened and developed programs, and continue to develop ways of assisting them so they can be truly integrated and truly accepted into Ontario, because for too long they have not been heard and they have not got the help. We now have substantive help, programs and partnerships which finally give our newcomers a fair chance that they've long deserved.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Minister of Citizenship. After stonewalling and casting aspersions of racism, the Premier was finally forced last week to ask for an investigation of the Minister of Citizenship's slush fund by the provincial Auditor General. This now sets up a bizarre scenario. The provincial Auditor General will do a special audit of the minister's operation of a slush fund, but meanwhile, the minister whose competence and integrity is in question is allowed to continue to keep his position. Minister, this is bizarre, to say the least. You have an opportunity here to do the right thing. Will you step aside while the Auditor General conducts his investigation of your ministry and your responsibilities?

1430

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** The Provincial Auditor is undertaking his review, as the Premier requested. He's doing that. I continue to do the work that has to be done, whether it is expanding opportunities for foreign-trained professionals, whether it is increasing settlement services in partnership with the federal government or whether it is ensuring that our newcomers get the support they need when they have social problems and when they need interpreter services. These are the ongoing, everyday issues that I've been helping to work on, to solve. I'm going to continue to do that, and I'm still doing that.

**Mr. Hampton:** The minister can try to avoid the obvious, but it looks oh so bizarre to people out there because the Auditor General is going to conduct not just an ordinary audit but a special audit of this minister's slush fund. Let there be no mistake: This minister is responsible for that slush fund.

The real question is this, Minister: You don't have any credibility now. Your credibility is, in fact, going to be investigated by the special auditor. The question is this: Will you do the right thing for the office? Will you do the right thing for the government? Will you do the right thing for the—

**The Speaker:** The leader would probably want to rephrase the question. Please rephrase the question.

**Mr. Hampton:** Will the minister do the right thing and step down pending the Auditor General's special investigation of your ministry?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** The right thing to do is to encourage everybody to do more to help newcomers and to encourage everyone to do their part: governments of all levels to invest in helping our new immigrants. That's what I was doing this morning. That's what I do, and that's what I continue to do, because for too long people with double PhDs have had doors slammed in their faces. For too long we've paid lip service to the great talent of our newcomers, and we haven't done enough. We're all to blame for that. I think it's incumbent upon us to keep on doing more in our schools, partnering with business and government to give newcomers a real fair shot at success in this province. That's what I'm focused on; that's what I'm continuing to do.

**Mr. Hampton:** The Minister of Citizenship wants to pretend that this somehow is about people out there across Ontario. No, Minister, this is about you. This is about the fact that you ran a slush fund with no public announcement, with no formal application process, with no criteria for the granting of money and with no follow-up evaluation or audit. You broke all the rules of good public administration. That's why the Premier has been forced to call for a special audit by the Auditor General.

My question to the minister is this: Does he honestly believe that he can continue in office after being discovered running that kind of slush fund with no accountability, no application process and where significant amounts of money wound up in the hands of very Liberal-friendly organizations?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** We've made investments in communities across this province to enhance our diversity, to enhance volunteerism, to build stronger communities and to respect our heritage. We made those investments because they were good investments. Those were investments that we made that were long overdue, because for many years there was no partnering with these agencies and community groups at all. These are agencies big and small that he characterizes in a very negative way. There are many, many excellent volunteers there, whether it is the United Jewish Appeal, Frontier College or the Maytree Foundation. All these organizations are great workers in helping to build a better Ontario. I was very proud to partner with them, as was our government.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Hampton:** To the Minister of Citizenship: Minister, despite your attempts to avoid the real issue, I'm going to bring it back to that. Over the years in this Legislature, a standard of ministerial accountability has been established. Here's how one MPP referred, with approval, to that standard of ministerial accountability: "When a staff member of Minister Jim Wilson revealed confidential information, Wilson rightfully stepped aside. Bob Runciman also stepped aside when a matter affect-



ing his ministry was under investigation.... The precedent has been set." That was his quotation.

Can you tell us, Minister, who that MPP was who spoke so approvingly of that ministerial standard?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** Again, this is the leader of the third party who called our investments and partnership with incredible volunteer organizations across this province—remember the words that he used?—"fly-by-night." He said that the organizations like the Midaynta Somali Community Services, which is a partner; the UJA Federation; the St. Catharines Folk Arts Council; CultureLink; Flemingdon food bank—he calls all these fly-by-night. These are organizations that my ministry has tried to help, and they needed that help, because for too long many of their needs had no one to meet them. We met them as best we could. There are many more organizations that need this kind of help. We're going to try to continue to do that.

**Mr. Hampton:** As usual, this minister's response is shameful nonsense. Minister, I'm going to answer the question that you failed to answer about ministerial accountability. The person who said that was one Dalton McGuinty. Dalton McGuinty said that he believed that a minister under investigation—even under investigation by the privacy commissioner—must step down.

Here's the reality for you, Minister: You're under a special audit by the Auditor General. That's a serious investigation. I guess the next most serious thing would be a criminal investigation. My question to you, Minister, is this: Will you do the right thing, meet Dalton McGuinty's preferred standard—

**The Speaker:** Order. I'll need that rephrased.

**Mr. Hampton:** Will the minister do the right thing and meet Dalton McGuinty's oft-stated standard and step down pending the investigation?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** The Premier has asked for the Provincial Auditor to do a review, and he's doing that. He's undertaking that. The need that I see and continue to work on is to ensure that organizations like the Catholic Immigration Centre in Ottawa continue their good work, to ensure that the Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples continues to get support, to ensure that organizations big and small across this province who are doing above and beyond the call to help newcomers and that volunteer organizations that are doing so much continue to get the support of our government, and that's what I continue to do.

**Mr. Hampton:** I would say to this minister that he cannot continue in his position, and he knows it. According to the standard set by Dalton McGuinty, the minister cannot stay in his job. According to common-sense standards of public conduct, you can't continue to be a minister when your ministry is under investigation by the Auditor General because you ran a grant program with no announcement, no formal application process, no criteria, no evaluation or auditing of where the money went or what it was being used for.

I just say to you, Minister: Face common sense. Will the minister do the right thing and meet Dalton

McGuinty's oft-stated standard for ministerial conduct and step down while he's under a special audit of the Auditor General?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** The investments and partnership that we undertook to make this province a more inclusive province, a truly accepting province in all sectors, were good investments. They were based on those sound principles of enhancing diversity, not just talking about it, of having true inclusion in this province and of building strong communities, whether they be our newcomer communities or established communities. Those are the investments we made, and they were much-overdue investments that for too long were ignored.

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That is the essence of what we did, and we continue to have strong faith in those investments and those organizations that are trying their best to deliver those much-needed services, whether it be large organizations or small ones. They all were trying to do their very best, and we were glad to partner with them.

#### ARTS AND CULTURAL FUNDING

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington):** My question is for the Minister of Culture and it concerns her portion of the \$4-billion McGuinty government slush fund. A couple of weeks ago, the Premier alluded to the fact that the money was being blown out the door—no formal application. Her ministry has a year-end slush fund. I would like to quote. The Premier said, "That money goes out the door just like that.... Year-end money—no application form—no formal process." That's what the Premier said.

We learned on Thursday that the total money spent by her ministry at year-end was more than \$142 million. Will the minister please provide us in this House with a full accounting of how this money was spent, to whom the grants were given, and what that application process was?

**Hon. Caroline Di Cocco (Minister of Culture):** First of all, I'm going to totally disagree with the premise of the question. I know that investments in arts and culture in this province are not something that the previous Conservative government had a very good track record on. As a matter of fact, their track record in investments in the arts and culture was very poor indeed.

First of all, the agencies that have been provided dollars by this government are subject to annual audits. They have boards of directors. They have significant private sector support as well. And—I'll say this again—it is smart to invest in arts and culture in this province because of the return on those investments and to the quality of life.

**Mrs. Savoline:** This is really a very simple—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The Minister of Finance will come to order.

Supplementary.



**Mrs. Savoline:** Again the Premier has been contradicted. It's a very simple question, and I don't know why this government insists on stonewalling at every turn, why they refuse to answer the simplest of questions. One hundred and forty-two million dollars was spent by this minister at year-end in 2005-06 and again in 2006-07: All we want is a clear accounting. Where did the money go? Will the minister please provide us with a list. Given how the Minister of Citizenship handled this slush fund and the Premier's explanation of his standard of handling this slush fund money, will the minister please tell us whether or not she supports calling in the Auditor General to investigate the process where grants were paid out of her ministry.

**Hon. Ms. Di Cocco:** I certainly know that the actions of this government are not about partisan interest, as the questions are in this House; it's about the public interest. I would like to say that every single penny that has been spent by my ministry and where it has gone is on the website. I'd like to state that there's detail of every single penny that has been spent, and I would suggest that the members opposite bother to click on to the website so they can see where the money has gone.

#### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** My question is to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Minister, the Chinese Professionals Association of Canada received multiple grants from the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. The minister has yet to produce any documents detailing the rationale behind the grants. Andi Shi is a former executive director of that organization and sits on the board. My question: Does the minister know Mr. Shi and, more importantly, is he aware of any partisan political affiliations he may have?

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** The Chinese Professionals Association of Canada has been helping newcomers for 15 years. They do it, for the most part, on a volunteer basis. They are mostly professionals. They're the ones who spend their volunteer time when many new immigrants come from China who are looking for a helping hand or looking for advice or looking for mentorship. The Chinese Professionals Association, over 22,000 members strong, has been an exemplary association for all those years and has a stellar record of doing many things that government never did. They were doing it on a volunteer basis. They are made up of people of all walks of life, of all parties and they are a great organization.

**Mr. Prue:** Again the minister fails to answer the question. We are asking this question because concerned members of the public have passed along an e-mail address for Mr. Shi. Perhaps it's an e-mail address you already have. It's [andi@ontarioliberalfund.com](mailto:andi@ontarioliberalfund.com).

Can the minister explain why a board member at an organization that received multiple grants from your government should have such an e-mail address?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** I've said before in this House that, in many circumstances, there have been an incredible number of highly skilled, highly educated, highly motivated newcomers from many countries who have had doors slammed in their face. In the Chinese community, there has been excellent success by many immigrants. But many of them also come with many barriers, language being one of the main ones and also introduction into the business community. This organization, the Canadian Chinese Professionals Association, has been doing great work of helping these newcomers who are highly frustrated sometimes but very willing to work. They have a proud record of doing great work and they will continue to do that because they care deeply about their fellow new immigrants who are coming here who are meeting these barriers. They're the ones I'm focusing on and those are the ones who should be the ones we invest in.

#### HEALTH CARE SOINS DE SANTÉ

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell):** My question is for the Minister of Health Promotion. Minister, today Ottawa residents are being told the story of a tale of two parties. While John Tory and Lisa MacLeod tour the city I represent, I wonder if they will be telling the real story about the shorter wait times in our hospitals, about the new regional assessment centre for cancer surgery, about the expansion of our hospitals or about the new doctors and nurses in the Ottawa area.

Je me demande toutefois s'ils vont dire aux résidents et résidentes d'Ottawa quels investissements seraient coupés par leur parti, qu'ils planifient couper 2,6 \$ milliards des soins de santé.

Minister, in my riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell we have seen the progress of our health care system: two satellite community health centres, a diabetes team in the Hawkesbury and District General Hospital and a family health team in—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked.

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**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** There's so much good news that the McGuinty government has delivered for health care in eastern Ontario. My hope is that when John Tory and his caucus are touring Ottawa, they're going around to the various sites and hospitals and apologizing for the massive destruction that they brought to the health care system. We all remember when they tried to shut down the cardiac unit at CHEO, and it was because of the leadership of the member from Ottawa Centre and the member from Ottawa South that the cardiac unit is staying at CHEO. Today, we were pleased to announce that the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario can now proceed with the implementation of the east-addition component of its redevelopment



program, another investment in the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

Furthermore, thanks to the good work of Jim Brownell, who has been adamant in ensuring that his part of the province gets health care funding, the Winchester District Memorial Hospital can now also proceed with its redevelopment program—more good news for health care in eastern Ontario.

I hope Mr. Tory says "I'm sorry" when he visits CHEO this afternoon.

**Mr. Lalonde:** It's good to hear that the children of eastern Ontario and the residents of Winchester and surrounding area will be able to have access to care closer to home thanks to these investments in hospital capital.

The previous government cut almost \$55 million from Ottawa hospitals in their first five years in office. The people of Ottawa remember the days when there was no way to track wait times and when infrastructure was crumbling. Their party's record in Ottawa: Grace hospital closed; Riverside hospital closed; tried to close the Montfort; tried to take away the cardiac rehab program from CHEO.

The party opposite wants to take us backwards and take \$2.6 billion out of the health care system. What is our plan to take us forward and continue to deliver a positive outcome for the people of Ottawa?

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** The honourable member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell summed up very succinctly the sad Tory record when it comes to health care in eastern Ontario. We have invested, under the leadership of Premier McGuinty, over half a billion dollars in health care and health care infrastructure in Ottawa in just the last three years.

Their party was ready to close the Montfort Hospital. We are going to double the Montfort Hospital, which serves the east end of our community.

The Queensway Carleton Hospital that's located in my riding: an addition of over 15,000 square feet of space, including three new operating rooms.

The Sisters of Charity: the renovation of two sites, St. Vincent and Elizabeth Bruyère.

The Ottawa Heart Institute: Premier McGuinty announced the installation of a fourth cath lab at the institute.

The Ottawa Hospital: The regional cancer centre, because we've had a capacity problem in Ottawa, is doubling in size at the General site and at the Queensway Carleton site.

The CHEO cardiac unit: Above and beyond reversing the Tory plan to shut down the CHEO cardiac unit, we've also added prenatal screening to—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

#### MINISTRY OF TOURISM GRANTS

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo–Wellington):** My question is for the Minister of Tourism, and it concerns his

share of the McGuinty Liberal government's unplanned, unbudgeted \$4-billion slush fund.

A couple of weeks ago, the Premier acknowledged that taxpayers' money was blown out the door by this government in a year-end slush fund. Imagine our shock when we learned that the total amount of this government-wide slush fund was nearly \$4 billion. That money goes out the door just like that, year-end money—no application form, no formal process. That is what the Premier said.

We learned on Thursday that the total money spent by this minister at year-end over the last two fiscal years was \$48 million. When will the minister please provide this House with a full accounting of how this money was spent, to whom the grants were given and what the application process was?

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** You know how the minister always gets up and says, "I'm glad you asked that question," and he really doesn't mean it? Well, I really mean it this time. I'm glad you asked that question, because when you have your leader touring down in Ottawa, for instance, you'll know that the Ottawa Congress Centre has been developing plans to either expand or build a new centre or make refurbishments to it. Last year, we provided some \$28 million so that they had a sense of security about that particular project. Of course, we have a board of directors there. That is a facility which is operated by the province of Ontario. There's an accountable board of directors there. This is something that I think the previous government, the previous Conservative government, gave a commitment for, but actually didn't flow the money on that particular occasion. I know the member would very much appreciate that, and I know that when I get to the supplementary question that you're going to ask, I'll have some further information that I think you will find very favourable to the community you're going to ask about.

**Mr. Arnott:** The minister, in his response, talked about how they'd spent \$28 million; I asked about \$48 million. It's a very simple question. I don't know why the government insists on stonewalling at every turn, why they refuse to answer the simplest questions about their slush fund: \$48 million spent by this minister at the year-end in 2005-06 and 2006-07. All we want is a clear accounting. Where did that money go, and will the minister please provide us with that list? Given how the Minister of Citizenship handled his slush fund and the Premier's explanation of his low standard for the handling of this slush fund money, will the minister please tell us whether or not he supports calling in the Auditor General to investigate the process by which grants were paid out of his ministry?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I can tell the member, first of all, that the Auditor General of the province of Ontario is looking at any and all of the ministries he wishes to at any particular time, but let me tell you—you want to know where the other \$20 million was this year? You'd have to ask your good friend the member for Erie—



Lincoln, because he was praising this particular grant. That was a grant for a new convention centre in Niagara Falls. You and I both know—you've been down to the area many times and you're a good advocate for tourism, I want to say. You would recognize how important it is to have a new convention centre for Niagara Falls to draw even more people. So in this particular year, \$20 million out of the \$35 million that the provincial government has committed for the convention centre, at the behest of the local municipality and people in the tourism business, went to them this year, and it was announced in the budget with a good deal of fanfare and applause. My good friend the member for Erie–Lincoln applauded that, and do you know something? He and I agree with each other on that particular issue.

#### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South–Weston):** My question is to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Andy Shi sits on the executive of the Chinese Professionals Association of Canada, an organization that receives multiple grants from this government. His day job, however, is vice-chair of the landlord and tenant tribunal, a job this government appointed him to in 2005. Did the minister know of any partisan affiliations on Mr. Shi's part when the government appointed him to his job at the tribunal?

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** What I do know very clearly, and what I have been involved in very clearly, is a very deep sense of passion for the incredible will to work, willingness to be great Canadians, by so many immigrants who come to Canada, especially those who come from China.

Many of them now come from mainland China. They come with great degrees, they come with incredible expertise, and they want to work in this country. I've listened to their pleas for help. Their agencies, whether it be CSIS or whether it be CPAC—all these organizations and all the neighbourhood groups that work with these new Canadians from China have been begging for assistance in better language training, better mentorship, better job training. That's what they've been asking for.

**Mr. Ferreira:** I will do my best to try and assist the minister with this. On October 26, 2005, Andy Shi appeared before the government agencies committee concerning his appointment. He was asked, "[O]n your involvement with the Liberal Party, have you acted as a volunteer, canvasser or someone who goes out and tries to get more memberships for the Liberal Party in any way?" He replied, "I think I did once during the last campaign...."

Can the minister explain why a person who only volunteered once for the Liberal Party would have an e-mail address at the Ontario Liberal Fund?

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**Hon. Mr. Colle:** The organization that this member is trying to besmirch is an organization that teams up with

Toronto-Dominion Bank, with Royal Bank, it teams up with Celestica, it teams up with businesses big and small made up of people of all political stripes—over 22,000 members—and has been doing incredible work in the community to help newcomers, and they have been very successful. Even this morning, they opened up their new service centre for newcomers in Agincourt. They are working, they are helping, they are doing what government should have been doing a long, long time ago when they were ignored for the last 15 years by government. We're working with such agencies because when those volunteer agencies put out their time, it's the best way of effecting success for our newcomers. These are incredibly good organizations.

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans):** My question is for the Minister of Education. In 2003, we inherited a broken public education system: 26 million lost school days due to teachers' strikes; \$2 billion in underfunding; increasing class sizes; stagnant test scores and student achievement; low graduation rates. We focused our efforts on fixing publicly funded education. The results are clear: Zero school days lost to teachers' strikes; \$3.5 billion in new investments—we invested more in our first term than the previous government did in their two terms in office; lower class sizes; a 10% increase in grades 3 to 6 test scores; a 73% graduation rate, up from 68%—that means 12,000 more graduates every year.

Minister, I understand that within the framework of success and publicly funded education, there are still financial issues that need to be addressed. Can you please advise my constituents why the SAT was sent in and how their report will help ensure that schools in Ottawa, just like the rest of our schools in Ontario, have the resources they need to ensure student success—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question's been asked.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** I thank the member from Ottawa–Orléans for his question about the special assistance team. I hope that while the Leader of the Opposition is in Ottawa apologizing to CHEO, he stops by the offices of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and apologizes for eight years of stripping the publicly funded education system. The special assistance team was asked to come into Ottawa by the Ottawa-Carleton board and when Rob Campbell, the chairman of that board, was asked about the SAT, he said, "I want to thank the government for responding so quickly and for their commitment to work in partnership with us to address our budget issues." If the report of the SAT is implemented, the OCDSB will be in a surplus position. We have continued to invest in the Ottawa board since we came to office—\$84.4 million more since we came into office. That's nearly \$2,000 per pupil more—\$22 million in new investments this year alone.

**Mr. McNeely:** My constituents will be glad to know that we continue to invest in our schools in Ottawa. I



understand that another success under our government is our Good Places to Learn initiative. Under the previous government, schools continued to defer badly needed repairs. In contrast, we have provided boards with resources to repair our schools—6,771 repairs across Ontario to date. In fact, for the two Ottawa school boards, there's been over \$80 million for over 500 school repair projects completed or under way.

Minister, the members opposite don't seem to share our optimism when it comes to publicly funded education. In fact, the member from Simcoe North, when talking about our Good Places to Learn initiative, said, "If you go to practically any school in the province of Ontario right now, you will see one of the big Liberal propaganda boards. If someone changes a doorknob or they change a mirror in a washroom or they put in a flowerbed, the government rushes out and puts these \$1,000 signs up." The member from Trinity-Spadina said, "We've got a government who says we're spending \$4 billion on capital programs." Minister, I'm certain that this is not the case. Will you please advise the House how we are repairing our schools in Ottawa to ensure that our students learn in a safe environment?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** To date, there have been over 6,700 repairs that have been completed or are under way in our Good Places to Learn. Maybe the members opposite should consult with a member for the Ottawa region. They could talk, for example, to the member for Nepean-Carleton, and they could hear about the repairs at Our Lady of Peace secondary school, \$334,000 for electrical and heating repairs; or Pope John XXIII school, \$533,000 for doors, windows, electrical, heating and air conditioning; or they could hear about the repairs at Sacred Heart Catholic secondary school, \$671,000 for electrical and roof repairs. The list goes on.

In addition to that, we're building new schools: St. Emily, a Chapman Mills elementary school, \$7 million; Berrigan Elementary School, \$11.7 million; Longfields/Davidson Heights for \$11.7 million; and a new Stittsville public school.

We're going so far beyond doorknobs and mirrors. We are rebuilding the public education system, including the buildings.

#### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** My question is to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and it concerns his slush fund. The minister has been asked twice now about yet another partisan link to the Liberal Party on the part of a board member of the Chinese Professionals Association of Canada. The minister has not answered the questions. The clouds continue to gather. The partisan stink continues to accumulate. Why won't this minister admit that he can't carry on and resign?

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** What has been awful is that, in a very reckless way, the opposition tries to cherry-pick different

organizations, when I've told the opposite side that if you look at all the organizations, big and small, you'll see members of many different parties on them, all walks of life. What we looked at in many of our investments was the need, the shortcomings there were in certain communities. In this case here, there were underserved areas in the Chinese-speaking newcomer community that were not met for years. That was the shame, that these incredibly motivated, talented people with double degrees, with a willingness to work, were not getting jobs, with an unemployment rate of about 50% in that community's newcomer—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Chudleigh:** Those answers are embarrassing. One board member worked in his office. Now it appears another has connections to the Ontario Liberal Fund. This slush fund is getting murkier and murkier and stinkier and stinkier. The minister cannot carry on. He is under a cloud. He should resign. I'm asking the minister if he'll resign until we get the answers to these very serious questions about the taxpayers of Ontario's money.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** I'd like to remind the House again that for a decade or more the newcomers who came from South Asia, China, Africa or Europe were not given fair treatment by this country or by this province, and we're all to blame for that. Finally, we've stepped forward to recognize that that was not fair, that if an immigrant went to another province they would get more money than if they came to Ontario. We are proud of the fact that we stood up and said that was wrong.

The member opposite didn't stand up for years and say that was wrong. We said it was wrong, and we've put our investments into ensuring that those newcomers were treated fairly and equitably. That's what these investments have done for those brave, courageous newcomers who are in every community. That's what—

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale-High Park):** My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Many multicultural groups in my riding find it outrageously insulting that this minister wraps himself in the cloak of multiculturalism, justifying his slush fund. Groups from my riding like the Vietnamese Women's Association, the Canadian Tibetan Association, the Somali Women's Association and the Canadian Polish federation have all come to Queen's Park demanding answers as to the neglect that the McGuinty Liberals have shown them. In my view, the next level of accountability is for the minister to resign and let the Auditor General do his work. So I ask, will the minister resign?

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**Hon. Mr. Colle:** I know the members opposite are making comments about multiculturalism and the fact that I'm proud to say that that is a Canadian value and an Ontario value. When I walk on the streets, or I go to the coffee shops, or I go to the temples or mosques, I'm very proud to say that I'm a Canadian. I'm very proud to say



that I'm a Canadian who was born in Italy and that this country accepted me, and that's what I'm all about.

**Ms. DiNovo:** With all due respect, what this minister is about is stonewalling and refusing to answer questions. The people of Ontario, I should say, have gained a victory in having the Premier finally admit that his government's year-end slush fund deserves investigating, that the Auditor General should in fact be called in. Mind you, it took three weeks of questioning, over a dozen editorials, pressure from groups that didn't receive a dime and a very funny editorial in the *Toronto Star* today. The next level of accountability, though, is clear to the people of Ontario, and that is for this minister step aside to let the Auditor General do his job. Will the minister resign?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** As I said, it is about who I am, and who I am is a proud Canadian who is very proud to help newcomers. I'm very proud to tell them that this province and this country want them, need them and will try to help them. That's the kind of work that I love doing because they're very appreciative. They don't ask for anything else but a job. That's all they ask. Some of them drive taxis; they deliver pizza; they work in variety stores; they work in factories; they clean offices. They've worked in silence and suffered in silence for too long.

That's who I've been dedicated towards helping. Because these wonderful people, 99.9% of them, deserve our help.

#### AMATEUR SPORT

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** I've got a question today for the Minister of Health Promotion. During the recent announcement in Ottawa about the 2009 World Junior Hockey Championship, I was reminded of your ministry's Quest for Gold program. Minister, the tournament and the Quest for Gold program are obviously both great news for amateur and elite athletes in Ontario. I'm proud of their success, and I know we all wish them well in future competitions.

This government created the Quest for Gold lottery in 2005. Today I would like to ask the minister to tell us how the coaches and the athletes in my riding of Oakville and athletes in Ottawa are benefiting from the Quest for Gold program.

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** The honourable member from Oakville has been a great supporter of amateur sports, not just in his own community of Oakville but throughout the province of Ontario.

We are making some great strides in helping our young amateur athletes. One hundred per cent of the revenues from this fund go to amateur athletes and their coaches: 30% of the funding of the Quest for Gold lottery to coaching and training and 70% directly to athletes. In Oakville, for instance, let me just brag about some of the athletes I know the member is proud of: sisters Claire and Ingrid Merry for snowboarding and sailing, respectively; Mallorie Nicholson for canoeing; Tanya Thomson for

canoeing; Andrew Hurd for swimming and Oskar Johansson for sailing.

In Ottawa, my hometown, we're very proud of Kevin McEwen, paralympic rugby; Kimberly Kerr, ice hockey; Patrick Mars, speed skating; and Emma Miskew for curling.

I just met one of the athletes on the weekend at Lakeview school, who thanked me and thanked the Minister of Finance and thanked the government of Ontario for providing \$8,000. The parents thanked me too, because they understand the cost involved in ensuring that an athlete reaches the podium at the international level. We will continue, thanks to the finance minister's budget, to include an additional \$10 million in Quest for Gold funding for the next fiscal year.

**Mr. Flynn:** As you know, sport isn't just about hosting tournaments or winning championships. It's also about us all getting in shape and staying healthy. I know that the ministry does great work with your Quest for Gold lottery, and it funds events like the World Junior Championships, Senior Games and the Ontario summer and winner games. These programs all help provide opportunities for the best athletes in Ontario.

In Oakville, I know you've also helped support programs at the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Halton, Kerr Street Ministries, the Oakville Family YMCA and the town of Oakville itself.

As you know, the previous Tory government made it incredibly expensive to even rent a school gymnasium. What has changed since you've come to office? How are communities like Oakville and your city of Ottawa beginning to benefit from programs like the community in action fund?

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** It is indeed an exciting day in Ottawa as we watch the Ottawa Senators. Most people are going to Ottawa today to watch the hockey game, but where are John Tory and his caucus? They're going to Ottawa to have a fundraiser. I don't know how many people are going to show up at a John Tory fundraiser when the Ottawa Senators are playing, but maybe when Mr. Tory is driving through some of the great communities of the city of Ottawa, he can once again, on his John Tory sorry tour, go and apologize to those young people who were shut out of schools because the rental rates were so high.

It's because of this Minister of Education that we've brought in the community use of schools program. The community use of schools program reduces rent so these young people can play basketball and street hockey and other activities in the gym. We also have the communities in action fund. I'm pleased to say that in the city of Ottawa, over \$2 million has gone into communities in action fund programming, including in the ridings of Nepean-Carleton—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.



## MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

1520

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. We note that the minister has refused now three times to answer a question that was asked about yet another partisan link to the Chinese Professionals Association of Canada, this in addition to the board member who works in the minister's office. The minister continues to refuse to answer questions relating to this very important issue. My question is simply this: Why, given the continuing revelations that come about in this place regarding the affairs in his office, does he continue to insist to stay in his place rather than do the right thing and step aside until the investigation is complete—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked.

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** As I said, there are very good, very worthy organizations that have been doing incredible work in helping immigrants. There are newcomers who for too long were ignored and never given the right resources. This government has made those partnerships, has fought to get the resources from the federal government and has expanded opportunities in programs like the medical graduate program and the bridge training program. Those are the outreaches that we've made with organizations, with school boards and with institutions big and small that were very needed. That's what we've done, and that's what we'll continue to do—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

## PETITIONS

### LAKERIDGE HEALTH

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I have a petition that reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Lakeridge Health should receive full funding to properly implement patient services in the community; and

"Whereas Lakeridge Health is currently facing an \$8-million shortfall as a result of government directives; and

"Whereas Lakeridge Health ranks among the best 25% of hospitals in efficiency performance even when compared to single-site hospitals; and

"Whereas this shortfall would negatively affect many vital programs, including the mental health program, crisis intervention services and addiction treatment services at Lakeridge Health;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to provide long-term fair operating funding for the important health care services of Lakeridge Health and immediately fully fund the current \$8-million shortfall."

I affix my signature in support.

### GTA POOLING

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. I'd like to thank a number of seniors in 3015 Parkerhill Road for having sent it to me. It reads as follows:

"End GTA Pooling: Pass Ontario Budget

"Whereas the city of Mississauga faces a long-term labour shortage, resulting in some 60,000 more people commuting into the city of Mississauga than leave Mississauga to earn their living and support their families each and every day; and

"Whereas 10 years ago the Ontario government of that day introduced the concept of GTA pooling, whereby funds are taken from the municipalities surrounding the city of Toronto and channelled into the city of Toronto without benefit or accountability to the taxpayers of those fast-growing cities, which face big-city needs and issues of their own; and

"Whereas ... pooling places an additional tax burden on the municipal property tax base of some \$40 million each and every year to the city of Mississauga; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario in its 2007-08 budget proposes to completely eliminate GTA pooling during a seven-year span beginning in fiscal year 2007-08, and that as pooling is phased out, Ontario will take responsibility for social assistance and social housing costs currently funded by GTA pooling;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That all parties within the government of Ontario support the swift passage of the 2007-08 Ontario budget and ensure that its provisions ending GTA pooling are implemented."

An excellent petition. I'm pleased to sign it and to ask page Zane to carry it for me.

### LAKERIDGE HEALTH

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** The member from Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford has a similar one. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has directed Lakeridge Health to cut mental health and addiction services and children's mental health services in order to balance its budget; and

"Whereas the ministry has directed these cuts, bypassing the Central East Local Health Integration Network, whose director has stated 'there will be no reduction in mental health and addiction services within the Central East LHIN'; and

"Whereas these cuts will likely transfer costs rather than save them, putting additional pressure on Lakeridge's emergency department, Durham police, Whitby Mental Health and social service providers" in the area; and

"Whereas the Central East already receives amongst the lowest per capita hospital funding in the province;

"We, the undersigned, request the Ontario Legislative Assembly to revisit this decision and ensure Durham residents receive appropriate support for adults and children who need treatment for mental health and addictions."

I'm pleased to sign this and support it on behalf of the constituents of the riding of Durham and present it Safe.

#### MINIMUM WAGE

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** I'm reading a petition to raise the minimum wage:

"Whereas more than 1.2 million Ontarians work at jobs that pay them less than \$10 an hour;

"Whereas the McGuinty Liberal government has failed to ensure a living wage for working families;

"Whereas people who work hard and play by the rules should be rewarded with the opportunity to earn a decent living and the chance to get ahead;

"Whereas the McGuinty Liberals were able to increase their own pay by 31%;

"Whereas an increase in the minimum wage to \$10 an hour"—now—"would help Ontario's working families earn a living wage;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Ontario government to pass Bill 150, the NDP's living wage bill, which would immediately increase the Ontario minimum wage to \$10 an hour."

Of course I agree with this petition and affix my signature hereto. I give it to Salena to hand in.

#### ROUTE 17

#### HIGHWAY 17

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell):** J'ai une pétition qui contient plus de 500 noms provenant de la cité de Clarence-Rockland dont j'ai le père Morin qui m'accompagne avec cette pétition.

«À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu que l'ancien gouvernement de l'Ontario a transféré la responsabilité de la route 17 aux municipalités, la ville d'Ottawa et des comtés unis de Prescott et Russell;

« Attendu que les municipalités n'ont pas les fonds suffisants pour l'entretien, la réfection de la route ou des ponts, sans mentionner son élargissement;

« Attendu qu'en 2001, l'administration des comtés unis de Prescott et Russell a estimé à 21 000 véhicules la circulation en semaine sur la 17 à l'entrée de la cité Clarence-Rockland et que depuis, ce chiffre a augmenté à 25 000 autos;

« Attendu que cette artère principale transférée aux municipalités est une route transcanadienne dans un état lamentable et continue à souffrir du temps et de l'achalandage de plus en plus important;

"Whereas the MTO regional staff had recommended and accepted as presented by the management review

board on April 27, 1992, that Highway 17 east of Ottawa be retained as a provincial collector highway following completion of Highway 417;

"Whereas the city of Ottawa continues giving building permits that become a safety issue;

"Whereas the eastern Ontario population demands the same road security services;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ontario Ministry of Transportation hereby takes back the responsibility for Highway 17/174 or gives provincial funding for its widening as mentioned during the MTO public hearings held previously."

I fully endorse this petition.

#### REMEMBRANCE DAY

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford):** I have a petition I'd like to present to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"Whereas Remembrance Day commemorates the armistice signed to end the First World War on November 11, 1918;

"Whereas in Canada, Remembrance Day honours the memory of those soldiers, including more than 116,000 Canadians, who bravely and unselfishly gave their lives in the First and Second World Wars, in the Korean War and in peacekeeping efforts in the struggle for peace and freedom;

"Whereas as a gesture of respect for the fallen, it is appropriate to unite in honouring their memories by observing two minutes of silence each Remembrance Day and to make the day a retail business and school holiday;

"Whereas MPP Joe Tascona introduced private member's Bill 204, entitled the Remembrance Day Observance Act, 2007, which passed first reading in the Legislature on April 12, 2007;

"We, the undersigned, petition the provincial government to give consideration to Bill 204 for Remembrance Day to become a retail, business and school holiday in Ontario."

I support the petition and affix my signature.

#### REGULATION OF ZOOS

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I have a petition today from people in Sarnia, Orono, Warsaw and Peterborough to regulate zoos and protect animals and communities.

"Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

"Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

"Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

"Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife, and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and



"Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act."

I agree with this petition and will affix my signature to it.

#### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** A petition to the Parliament of Ontario signed by good citizens of Cambridge:

"Whereas gasoline prices have increased at alarming rates during the past year; and

"Whereas the high and different gas prices in different areas of Ontario have caused confusion and unfair hardship on hard-working Cambridge families;

"We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"(1) That the McGuinty government immediately freeze gas prices for a temporary period until world oil prices moderate; and

"(2) That the McGuinty government immediately lower their taxes on gas for a temporary period until world oil prices moderate; and

"(3) That the McGuinty government immediately initiate a royal commission to investigate the predatory gas prices charged by oil companies operating in Ontario."

As I agree with the petition, I will sign same.

#### PARENTING EDUCATION

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas effective parenting practices do not come instinctively and parenting is our most crucial social role, parenting and human development courses need to be taught to all secondary school students. Parenting education will: reduce teen pregnancies; reduce the rate of costly fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and increase the number of healthy pregnancies; reduce the number of costly social problems related to ineffective parenting practices; and improve the 'social fabric' of Ontario to create a more civil society. Parenting education for students is considered to be socially valuable by a majority of adults of voting age and should be included as a mandatory credit course within the Ontario curriculum;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the requirements of the secondary school diploma to include one senior level (grade 11 or 12) credit course in parenting education (students to select one of: living and working with children...; parenting...; issues in human growth and development...; or parenting and human development...) as a compulsory credit."

I agree and support this. I will affix my signature, and it'll be taken by page Sridaya.

1530

#### LABORATORY SERVICES

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** I have a petition to do with Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare lab services. It's signed by members from Burk's Falls, Emsdale, Novar and Huntsville. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the residents of the communities served by Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare ... wish to maintain current community lab services; and

"Whereas maintaining community lab services promotes physician retention and benefits family health teams; and

"Whereas the funding for community lab services is currently a strain on the operating budget of MAHC; and

"Whereas demand for health services is expected to continue to rise with a growing retirement population in Muskoka-East Parry Sound; and

"Whereas the operating budget for MAHC needs to reflect the growing demand for services in the communities of Muskoka-East Parry Sound;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the McGuinty government and the Minister of Health increase the operating budget of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare to permit continued operation of community lab services."

I support this petition.

#### PARENTING EDUCATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly that's signed by people from all over southern Ontario, and I thank them for their time. It reads as follows:

"Whereas effective parenting practices do not come instinctively and parenting is our most crucial social role, parenting and human development courses need to be taught to all secondary school students. Parenting education will: reduce teen pregnancies; reduce the rate of costly fetal alcohol syndrome disorders and increase the number of healthy pregnancies; reduce the number of costly social problems related to ineffective parenting practices; and improve the 'social fabric' of Ontario to create a more civil society. Parenting education for students is considered to be socially invaluable by a majority of adults of voting age and should be included as a mandatory credit course within the Ontario curriculum.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the requirements of the secondary school diploma to include one senior level (grade 11 or 12) credit course in parenting education (students to select one of: living and working with children...; parenting...; issues in human growth and development...; or parenting and human development...; or parenting and human development...) as a compulsory credit."

or parenting and human development...) as a compulsory credit.”

I'm pleased to affix my signature and send this petition down with page Zane.

### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

“Whereas the price of gas is reaching historic price levels; and

“Whereas provincial and federal governments have done nothing to protect consumers from high gas prices; and

“Whereas provincial tax on gas is 14 cents per litre and federal tax is 10 cents per litre, plus 6% GST; and

“Whereas these taxes have a detrimental impact on the economy and are unfair to commuters who rely on vehicles to travel to work; and

“Whereas the province has the power to set the price of gas and has taken responsibility for energy prices in other areas, such as hydro and natural gas; and

“Whereas we call on the province to remove the 14.7-cents-per-litre gas tax and on the federal government to eliminate the 10-cent gas tax, plus 6% GST, which amounts to 30% or more;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and urge the Premier to take action and to also persuade the federal government to remove its gas taxes.”

I affix my signature.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### SAFER ROADS FOR A SAFER ONTARIO ACT, 2007 LOI DE 2007 VISANT À CRÉER DES ROUTES PLUS SÉCURITAIRES POUR UN ONTARIO PLUS SÛR

Mrs. Cansfield moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 203, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Remedies for Organized Crime and Other Unlawful Activities Act, 2001 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 203, Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi de 2001 sur les recours pour crime organisé et autres activités illégales et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mrs. Cansfield, the floor is yours.

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Transportation):** I'd like to share my time today with the member from Willowdale and my parliamentary assistant, the member from Ottawa-Orléans.

I rise in the House today to urge passage of a piece of legislation that everyone knows would save lives on

Ontario's roads. Since our government took office nearly four years ago, the McGuinty government has worked tirelessly with our safety partners to improve road safety on Ontario's roads.

Despite Ontario's reputation as a road safety leader, our government knows that one life lost to reckless or dangerous driving is one life lost too many. This bill would target aggressive and dangerous driving behaviours such as drinking and driving and street racing.

These statistics bear repeating: Approximately one quarter of all fatalities on Ontario's roads involve drinking drivers. Each year about 16,000 people are convicted of drinking and driving in Ontario—approximately two people each hour, every day. These people endanger the lives of Ontarians right across this province. In 2004 alone, drinking and driving claimed 192 lives in Ontario.

Ontario's prevention strategies need to be strengthened to target high-risk drivers, first-time and repeat offenders. If passed, this legislation would increase roadside driver's licence suspensions for drunk drivers, it would allow the courts to take vehicles away from repeat drinking and driving offenders and it would establish an early ignition interlock program for Criminal Code offenders. Anyone caught driving with a blood alcohol concentration of between .05 and .08 would face tough sanctions that will get even stiffer for repeat offenders. Roadside driver's licence suspensions would range from three days for a first reading of between .05 and .08 blood alcohol level to seven days for a second infraction and 30 days for a third or subsequent infraction.

The second time someone is caught, they would have to complete an education program. If they're caught again, they'll have to install an ignition interlock device in their vehicle for six months in addition to mandatory education. So make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, we're getting even tougher on people who drink and drive.

This proposed approach also includes civil and criminal measures that could mean repeat drinking and driving offenders would forfeit their vehicles under the Attorney General's innovative Civil Remedies Act.

That's not all. Since 1999, 35 people have lost their lives to street racing in Ontario, often with innocent people the victims of these pointless races. This legislation would also crack down on street racers who choose to race on Ontario's roads.

This legislation would give law enforcement people the power to suspend the drivers' licences and impound the vehicles of drivers involved in street racing and stunt driving. Police would have the power to issue an immediate roadside seven-day driver's licence suspension and a seven-day vehicle impoundment for street racing or for participating in a driving contest or stunt driving. It would increase the minimum fine from \$200 to \$2,000 and would increase the maximum fine from \$1,000 to \$10,000. Our street racing fines would be the highest in Canada, sending a strong message to racers: If you endanger lives, be prepared to pay.

Police officers will also have the tools that they need to stop these behaviours, and it will offer further pro-



tection to them in the line of duty. You know, it's shocking to consider that more police officers are killed at roadside than in any other activity. That's why we're proposing to allow police vehicles to display flashing blue lights in addition to the red lights that already are in use. This change would improve a police vehicle's visibility, which is crucial to the officer's safety, especially at night. This would help protect the police while they're out protecting us.

1540

I also want to emphasize that injury prevention is a driving force behind this legislation. The senseless acts of street racing and impaired driving exact a terrible toll on the people of this province. We as a government need to do all we can to prevent these tragedies from occurring.

I am also pleased to be able to say that this bill truly reflects the views of this House. With the help of the member from Oak Ridges, the bill now includes an amendment passed by the finance and economic affairs committee that proposes a ban of a connected nitrous oxide system while driving a motor vehicle on a highway. Offenders would be fined up to \$2,000 and face six months in jail. To be clear, this amendment will not target drivers of modified or high-performance vehicles that engage in legitimate racing or exhibitions of driving skill on racetracks or, having obtained the necessary approvals from a municipality, on closed roads.

Bill 203 would build on what we've already achieved, advancing this government's commitment to improve road safety. This bill is proof positive of the McGuinty government's commitment to ensuring that Ontario's roads remain safe for those who use them.

Our government is proud to have passed laws that make booster seats and child safety seats mandatory, that require every occupant in a motor vehicle to be buckled up properly while travelling in Ontario. We are proud to have tough laws that create sanctions for drinking and boating and that deliver longer licence suspensions for repeat offenders who speed 50 kilometres or more over the limit.

Our government has made road safety a priority. This proof is before the House. So I urge all members to give this legislation their enthusiastic support, and I thank you for the opportunity.

**Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale):** I rise in the House today to speak in favour of support of Bill 203, the Safer Roads for a Safer Ontario Act.

This is very important legislation. If passed, it is going to do a tremendous amount to prevent injury and death as a result of drunk drivers. Anything we can do to eliminate the scourge of death and injury caused by drunk drivers, this House should do. Impaired driving in this day and age, in May 2007, still remains by far the largest criminal cause of death in Canada. When you sit back and think of that—drunk driving is still the largest criminal cause of death in Canada—it behooves us to do something and to do something immediately.

It's also, the statistics tell us, the largest cause of criminal death in this province. We hear much about

guns and gangs, but criminal death caused by drunk driving is still the leading cause of death in Canada and in Ontario.

Bill 203, if passed, is going to protect Ontario families from individuals who put other people's lives at risk by driving while impaired. The bill is going to do a lot of things, but I just want to touch on a few of those things. Among other things, it's using a mix of criminal and civil law tools to help keep our roads safer from drunk drivers.

Let me speak for a minute or two about some of the initiatives on the criminal law side. We are introducing amendments to the Highway Traffic Act that would establish an early ignition interlock program for convicted offenders. This early ignition interlock program is going to help prevent repeat drinking-and-driving offences, because it's actively going to prevent offences from occurring in the first place.

Research tells us that while in use, ignition interlock is extremely successful at preventing re-offending. I've looked at the statistics and I've analyzed them myself, and I'm convinced that this idea of having an interlock mechanism in a car for an offender who's probably at a high risk of re-offending—if we can stop them from starting that car in the first place, we have gone a long way to prevent death and injury.

So how does this system work? An interlock ignition device is an alcohol breathing screen. It's a little gadget that's hooked up to the ignition of the car. It sits on the dashboard of a car. It's installed in the vehicle. It prevents the vehicle from starting if the device detects alcohol concentration at a preset limit.

We have someone who has a history of drinking and driving; this piece of equipment is in their car, hooked into the ignition system. When they get in the car, before they can turn the ignition and start the engine, they have to blow into the little box, and it does a reading. If the reading is higher than a preset level, the ignition won't start. In fact, as I understand it, a great bell, a sort of mini-siren, goes off, and it is an embarrassingly loud sound. It causes a great fuss. In any event, the car won't start.

Before starting the car, the driver has to blow into that device. I've said that the ignition won't start if there's a reading over a certain limit. As long as the car is running—let's take an example: They've got in the car, blown in the gadget, they haven't got alcohol in their breath, the car starts and they're on their way down the road. Somebody takes a drink while they're driving, or stops the car with the ignition running, goes into a pub, has a couple of drinks and comes back out. That machine, that gadget, is set up so that, randomly and periodically, at any time that the car is in motion, the machine comes on and the driver of the car is required to blow into the device. Again, if the device detects alcohol beyond a preset limit, guess what? The car shuts down, and it shuts down with bells and whistles blowing.

If a sample is not provided—if someone tries to start the car without providing the sample—or if the alcohol concentration rises above the preset limit, that device that



I've talked about issues a warning. Internally it records the event, activates various alarms, flashing lights, honking, and the ignition is automatically shut off.

Under the proposed early ignition interlock program, convicted offenders could apply to reinstate their driver's licence early if they participate in the program. This program is geared for someone who has been convicted, they've paid their fine or done their time in jail, and they want to start driving again. They've got to have this interlock system on their car. If they participate in the program successfully, they can apply to have their driver's licence reinstated at an earlier time.

The length of the ignition interlock period and the criteria for how offenders could qualify are going to be authorized by regulations in the legislation.

I can tell you that according to Mothers Against Drunk Driving, commonly known as MADD here in Canada, upwards of 60% of convicted drunk drivers continue to drive with a suspended licence. These repeat offenders are obviously not deterred by the current sanctions against impaired driving. The bill, if passed, would increase the sanctions available to us when dealing with these kinds of irresponsible offenders.

We're proposing a new civil forfeiture law to take drunk drivers and their vehicles off the road. Bill 203, if passed, would amend the Civil Remedies Act. What it's going to do is to allow the civil courts, on application by the Attorney General's office, to impound and forfeit vehicles that have been used or are likely to be used—and that's key here, "or are likely to be used"—by people who have had two or more previous licence suspensions within a 10-year period for drinking and driving.

This gives us a tool to be pre-emptive. We have someone who has a history of drinking and driving, and if we have reason to believe that they might continue to drink and drive, we can pre-empt it by seizing their car or any car they may drive.

1550

This bill, if passed, would also allow the civil courts to impound and forfeit vehicles used by those who have continued to drive while their licence is suspended for drinking and driving. The bottom line here is: You can't drink and drive if you don't have a car. If we think there's a risk that someone is going to be drinking and driving, this legislation enables us to pre-empt them, to take the car away before they can get behind the wheel.

Under these proposed amendments, the civil courts would also be given power to release a vehicle if the offender agrees to certain terms and conditions. So there's a mechanism to oversee this process of forfeiting cars and the seizure of cars and so on. These conditions would include fitting the vehicle with the ignition lock I've referred to or an undertaking by the owner that the vehicle would not be allowed to be driven by persons whose actions have resulted in the forfeiture application.

Our goal is to make the roads of Ontario safer for Ontario families; our goal is to stop people who put other people's lives at risk; our goal here under this legislation is to be pre-emptive, to do what we can to stop drinking

drivers before they get behind the wheel. This legislation is going to do that, and I encourage all members from all sides of the House to support this legislation.

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa—Orléans):** This worthwhile package of legislative measures proposed by the Minister of Transportation will, if enacted, save lives. As the minister said, despite Ontario's role as a leader in road safety, we must do more. We want to protect Ontarians from drinking drivers. Drivers who repeatedly blow in the .05 to .08 blood alcohol level would face increasingly severe treatment. The reason for that is that research has shown that drivers with a blood alcohol level of .05 to .08 are eight times more likely to be involved in a collision than drivers who have not been drinking. That source is the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Our proposal will get impaired drivers back on track while protecting innocent, law-abiding people. For those who are repeatedly convicted of a Criminal Code impaired driving offence, they would face the possibility of having their car ordered forfeited by the courts under the provisions of the proposed legislation, as was discussed by the previous speaker. If passed, the bill would improve safety by keeping drinking drivers and those who street race off Ontario roads.

We're also working to get street racers off our streets as quickly as possible by giving the police the power to issue an immediate roadside driver's licence suspension and a seven-day vehicle impoundment if you're caught street racing, participating in a driving contest or stunt driving. This bill would deter and hopefully prevent many tragedies from happening.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the member from across the House for his amendment to ban nitrous oxide. There are those who say that people can't get past party politics, but this amendment is proof positive that when it comes to protecting Ontarians, there are no party politics, only common interest.

This legislation would make our roads safer for everyone, for the people who use them, especially for the women and men who risk their lives to patrol them: the police. Our government asked them what they thought would help keep them safe. They told us that they felt their visibility would be increased if they were able to use a combination of flashing blue and red lights. Our government has listened and agreed. Reducing the chances that Ontario's police officers could be involved in a roadside fatality and helping protect them while they're protecting us is the least we can do, and I'm glad to see everyone here agrees.

Motor vehicle collisions exact a huge toll on Ontario, both in terms of lives lost and in massive economic costs. Indeed, motor vehicle collisions cost Ontarians \$9.1 billion annually in social and health care costs. That is simply unacceptable. I know the members of the official opposition and the third party are very supportive of any measures that would further protect the lives of Ontario's citizens. This bill is exactly that kind of measure. With everyone's help, we can ensure the fast passage of this



legislation. We can give the police the tools they need to stop street racers, we can prevent injury through reduced collisions and better visibility for police officers, and we can get street racers and drunk drivers off roads, preventing further loss of life through these senseless acts.

As a government, we can take pride in what we've already accomplished. In addition to what the Minister of Transportation said, the McGuinty government's road safety record includes the doubling of speeding fines in construction zones when workers are present; nearly doubling the fines for speeding 30 to 34 kilometres per hour over the limit; requiring every school bus in Ontario, including old and new, to be equipped with a safety-crossing arm on the front bumper; and charging vehicle owners as well as drivers for illegally passing a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing, regardless of who was driving the vehicle at the time of the incident.

I call on my colleagues in this House to support this legislation and urge its speedy passage. Let's work together to make Safer Roads for a Safer Ontario a reality.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby–Ajax):** I'm pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill 203 and to address the comments made by the Minister of Transportation, the member from Willowdale and the member from Ottawa–Orléans. I would concur that this is an important piece of legislation for public safety, and it is a welcome sign that all parties are working together on this piece for the protection of the public.

I would say that it's sad but true that this legislation is necessary. Even today, as I was driving here to Queen's Park, I was listening to a radio call-in show. While the vast majority of the people calling in to this show were certainly aghast at the thought of street racing, and especially young people participating in it, there were still a few callers who had some unbelievable ideas about specifically what young men should be able to do in cars. They really didn't see anything wrong with having these nitrous oxide systems and these souped-up cars and didn't see it as a problem; it was sort of a manly thing to do. I was completely appalled, as were many of the other callers into the show. But sadly, that sort of view of the world persists, and it's necessary, I think, for the protection of the public that we do proceed with legislation of this nature.

Of course, it does assist the police with their investigations in terms of allowing them to impound vehicles and so on. It also allows them a combination of criminal and civil remedies in order to make the system work and for the legislation to be enforced, and it enhances the fines and terms for people convicted of these crimes and the penalties that they're going to be subjected to. It also brings forward and enhances the legislation that allows the civil remedy and allows the vehicles to be seized and to be sold as proceeds of criminal investigations. It certainly is welcome news that

this will be able to be used for a fund to protect the public and to be used for victim services in the future.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** Certainly, we in the New Democratic Party caucus support any measure that keeps drinking and driving from our streets and any measure that makes it more difficult for those who would do so to engage in extreme driving. I'd like to mention that it is really "extreme driving"—the term—rather than "street racing," which has some glamour associated with it in certain sectors of our society.

Some concerns as well, of course: the enforcement of this bill. I know that our police forces—and particularly I acknowledge our police forces, as this is Police Week—are already strained with what we require of them, never mind that they're now going to be required ever more so on our highways and byways.

Also our victim services: It's interesting that the Ontario Network of Victim Service Providers sent me an e-mail just recently, and apparently each hour of victim services is funded at the estimated rate of \$9.70, not even the \$10 minimum wage rate. So we would love to see some of the funds raised by these increased fines going toward victim services, toward the victims of these crimes, and there have been many victims of these crimes. I'm glad to see that the member from Oak Ridges's amendment was added, because that certainly strengthens this as well.

Furthermore, of course, we know that no matter how much education you do, crimes will still be committed. But quite frankly, when we watch some of the ads on television about some cars that are being sold and we see the stunts that are being performed in those ads, with a disclaimer at the bottom saying, "Don't try this at home," we want to ask—these are the ads that our children are seeing, that our teenagers are seeing, ads that make it look cool to drive at unnecessary speeds in extreme driving circumstances. So I'd like to have members across this House look at the media and its impact on extreme driving as well.

1600

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I'm very pleased to rise today in support of Bill 203. I commend all members of the House, because there seems to be a sense of co-operation and support as we hopefully pass this bill before too long.

About 20 years ago I was involved in an accident and hit by a drunk driver on my way back from a meeting and was nearly killed, the police told me. My car was a write-off. I guess our experiences colour our view of these things. That's why I was so pleased when Minister Cansfield brought in this legislation that would toughen up already tough drinking and driving laws in the province of Ontario—I'm very supportive of that—and also clamp down on repeat drunk drivers. There's nothing more frustrating for my constituents in Ottawa West–Nepean, where they see these individuals who seem to be back on the street the next day and they're not



being punished as a result of being intoxicated while driving.

On the issue of street racing, I commend the member from Oak Ridges for his amendment with respect to nitrous oxide. There's no reason in the world why a car on a highway or street needs that kind of equipment to make it go even faster. This legislation will be amongst the toughest in North America. Street racing is not only extremely dangerous, but I know that when I was a city councillor in Ottawa it was extremely annoying for people who are close to those streets. The noise and non-stop grinding and spinning of wheels and burning of rubber was extremely frustrating for people who were trying to get their children to go to bed or other individuals who were trying to enjoy a backyard barbecue—to have this constant horrible noise, let alone the risk to individuals in our community.

This Bill 203, Safer Roads for a Safer Ontario Act, is long overdue, and I commend all members of the House for putting aside partisanship in the spirit of co-operation to get this bill passed.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I'm pleased to rise to add some comments to Bill 203 after the minister's speech, and the member from Willowdale and the member from Ottawa–Orléans. I know the former Minister of Transportation, the member from Oak Ridges, will be speaking next.

Certainly the PC Party supports this bill and supports getting tougher with drinking and driving and bringing in new rules to do with street racing. I have some members of my family who enjoy racing, but I would say that racing is something that should happen only on the track. That's the appropriate place for it.

The member from Willowdale talked at length about the ignition interlock devices that are covered by this bill. I agree that we need devices for those repeat offenders so that they have to install these on their vehicles and blow into this device to be able to operate the vehicle. He also, last year, brought in a private member's bill, which I supported, that ties drinking and boating to your driver's licence. We're right about the time of year when people in my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka will be getting out and enjoying the beautiful lakes around the area, so it's important to remember that just as now we don't accept drinking and driving, we should not in the future accept drinking and boating as well, because you can have tragic accidents when you mix booze and boating.

I look forward to hearing from the member from Oak Ridges, who will be the next speaker on this bill. I also commend him for the work he did on his private member's bill on street racing, which is now a part of this Bill 203.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Two-minute response, the member for Ottawa–Orléans.

**Mr. McNeely:** I would like to thank the member for Whitby–Ajax, the member for Parkdale–High Park, the Minister of Health Promotion and the fourth member who spoke to the comments made by the minister, myself

and the PA for the Attorney General, I believe; is that correct, Mr. Zimmer?

**Mr. Zimmer:** Yes.

**Mr. McNeely:** I was very fortunate to work with the minister on this through the meetings we held to get comments from the public and through the clause-by-clause, which happened, I think, last Thursday.

I think there's generally good support for this from the other parties. We were able to change the bill to accommodate the nitrous oxide for street racing, and I think it's a stronger bill as a result of that.

It was interesting as well to see the police officers come in to put on a demonstration of what the difference is going to mean with the visibility of their police cars and with their protection when the flashing blue lights are added with the flashing red lights. There are a lot of jurisdictions that have that already, and we're bringing Ontario into that same position for the police officers, who are out there to protect us. This was certainly very important to them, and we were very pleased to include that in the legislation.

One of the things I'd like to mention: I worked with Vince Bevin, the police chief for the city of Ottawa, for three years when I was a councillor and often spoke with him. I'm sure, and the Minister of Health Promotion has confirmed, that they're very much in favour of this legislation, which is going to help them do a better job on our highways. When you get all those red flashing lights at night, when the traffic is stopping, it's very difficult to know whether there's a police vehicle there or not. With the flashing red and blue lights, we're going to be able to see the police officers. That protection is needed, and I'm very pleased that that's part of this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I'm pleased to participate in this debate. I believe this bill is an example of what can happen when all parties find common ground on a very important issue. It is also an excellent example of a bill being strengthened as a result of contributions from members of the opposition and what can happen when, in fact, those amendments are taken seriously by the government of the day.

I'd like to, at the very outset, dedicate the results of this bill to my former constituents Rob and Lisa Manchester and their daughter Katie Marie Manchester, who is now an orphan. The Manchesters really were my inspiration for drafting the private member's bill that would deal specifically with the criminal act of street racing.

Rob and Lisa Manchester were both killed on May 27, 2006. They were a young couple and had their entire lives ahead of them. Their lives were snuffed out because of the irresponsible act of someone who chose to get into their vehicle and, rather than use it responsibly, chose to make a very bad decision. That bad decision resulted in the loss of two lives and a young girl who will never know her parents. That incident brought back to me the importance of government taking its responsibility to



ensure that there are consequences for irresponsible actions.

I've said many times in the course of debate on this issue that we cannot legislate responsibility, so, unfortunately, there will always be people who will do the wrong thing and who will make the wrong decision. Whether that's regarding drinking and driving or whether that's street racing, there are going to be people who make those wrong decisions and, as a result, there will also always be the consequences.

Some of those consequences are going to be very obvious, and that's to the victims of that irresponsible decision. Unfortunately, those people, in some cases, will either lose their lives or their lives will be permanently changed as a result of injury.

Two individuals who fall into that category are Allison Hickey and her fiancé, Mark Radman, whose lives will be forever changed as a result, again, of the irresponsible acts of an individual who chose to engage in street racing.

1610

We are going to have consequences of those acts, but our purpose here in bringing forward this legislation is to ensure that there are also consequences for those individuals who choose to engage in that irresponsible activity, whether that be street racing or drinking and driving.

I want to thank the government, I want to thank the Minister of Transportation, I want to thank the standing committee for accepting the amendments to the legislation that I proposed regarding the use of nitrous oxide. I do believe that was a very important component of this legislation that sends a signal, again, to those who would be engaged in recreational racing, against which I have no objection at all. But let's make sure that we do that on a racetrack under circumstances that are appropriately monitored and where we have safety precautions in place. If someone wants to soup up a vehicle to get that additional horsepower in the context of a racetrack, I believe that should be their right, as long as it's being dealt with in a responsible way. But to take that vehicle and to have that equipment connected in a vehicle that's on a public highway is wrong, and we needed to send the message that there will in fact be serious consequences.

To this point, I want to clarify that it's not just simply for the purposes of preventing that additional dangerous and killer speed that nitrous oxide can inject into that vehicle that I put this forward, but it's also for the benefit of police officers and emergency personnel or firefighters who would often be the first on scene at a traffic accident that may have been caused by and involves a vehicle where there is nitrous oxide present. The reality is, if a vehicle is involved in an accident and there is a fire, the explosion that can result from a nitrous oxide tank would take not only the lives of the people involved in the accident but also of those emergency personnel who are there to attend to the scene. So it was the right thing to do, and I want to thank the government for responding accordingly.

I want to also take the opportunity to thank the many individuals who supported this initiative over the course of the last number of months, beginning with the introduction of my private member's bill and subsequently the round table that was hosted by the Minister of Transportation, and the many stakeholders who participated in that to provide their recommendations in terms of what measures would be appropriate to deal with the issue of street racing. I want to also thank Adrienne Seggie, whose son, Matthew Power, lost his life to street racing in November 2006 in Hamilton—again, a young man who had his entire future ahead of him, and his only mistake was that he was an innocent bystander ready to cross the street when someone took his life in a very, very brutal way.

Adrienne Seggie, instead of simply mourning the loss of her son, took it upon herself to launch a campaign to convince legislators here at Queen's Park, as well as in Ottawa, to do something about this and to take action. She initiated a march that started in Hamilton. I welcomed her here. We had a press conference in the media studio here in Queen's Park. She appealed to our government, to every member of this House, to take action on this important issue. I mention her because it represents another example of how individuals can, in fact, effect positive change and for her to be able to see a purpose in an event that was so tragic in her life. As she said many times, if the death of her son can at least contribute to legislators taking a positive step to ensure that other lives are saved, she will take solace in that. So today we say to Adrienne Seggie, thank you for your efforts on behalf of this issue.

Finally, I want to say thank you to members of this House, because we are taking an opportunity here to implement legislation that will have the effect of saving lives. And whether it be the measure for street racing or whether it be the additional measures inherent in this legislation that will once again send a message to people that drinking and driving is unacceptable in this province, it is a piece of legislation where we, as legislators, have found the common ground. We have debated areas of the legislation that we felt could be improved. There was give and take. We found that the standing committee performed its function, acted responsibly. There was evidence that the Legislature and the legislative process actually can work if we allow it to.

To that end, I want to now move on beyond the legislation and say, with this legislation as a platform, it is now up to, again, this House to ensure that these provisions are properly enforced, and that those who contravene this legislation, in fact, experience the full measure of the consequences that we intend, as legislators, to have implemented in the real world. I'm concerned that we have far too many examples in this province of police officers on the front lines doing their job, laying the charges, bringing people into the courtroom, and then our justice system fails the very people who it was intended to protect. We have far too many victims of justice in this province. We advocate for



victims of crime; it is time that we also looked in this Legislature at the victims of justice. What I mean by that is the fact that there are far too many people who are caught in our legal system, which is falsely referred to as a justice system, because for far too many people it is difficult to access justice. They enter a legal system where there are high legal costs, there are procedures and procedural hoops that people are asked to jump through, and those with the ability to afford the best legal representation, notwithstanding the legislation that we intend here, never experience the consequences.

1620

I want to give you an example of that breakdown. I'm going to refer to our court system in York region. I have here a report that comes to me now on a weekly basis of what happens in our courts. I'm going to read this into the record, because it's important for my colleagues here to understand what is happening and that we are very careful to ensure that we not only celebrate the passage of this legislation, but also challenge the Attorney General to ensure that the courts are resourced sufficiently to ensure that we can support and in fact enforce the legislation as we intended.

On March 28 this year, the Tannery court in Newmarket, the T1 court, was closed. No procedures took place in that court on March 28. There were 14 officers scheduled. Forty-one charges were involved—four major vehicle convictions involving five civilian witnesses. They were all scheduled to be there and were in fact there in person. The court never did proceed. The reason was, very simply, there was no justice of the peace scheduled for that day.

On March 29, the next day, again in the Tannery court, it was short one justice of the peace, and here were the consequences to justice that day: The police were unable to swear in any new information or subpoenas. Thirty-six charges were scheduled for first-attendance hearings involving 28 civilians, who were all there and all had to be rescheduled.

On March 30, the next day, the Tannery court, the T1 court, was closed again. The reason? They were short two justices of the peace. Eleven police officers involving 38 charges were on-site, two major vehicle charges involving five civilian witnesses were there, and no new information or subpoenas could be sworn in that day.

On April 4, the Tannery court was once again short one justice of the peace. The result? The adjournment of a serious trial involving five civilian witnesses.

On April 5 in the Richmond Hill court, there was one justice of the peace to manage the court on that occasion. The result was that the intake office was closed and an additional three matters were put over to another day.

I wanted to read that brief schedule into the record so that we had an understanding of what is taking place. Put yourself into the shoes of those police officers who are scheduled to attend at the court. For every police officer who is in a courtroom, we don't have them on the street. It's a waste of their time, it's a waste of resources, and it all comes down to the resourcing of the court system. If

the government wants to put an additional 1,000 police officers on the street, they simply have to make sure we resource the courts. Get them out of the courtroom, wasting an entire day waiting for a case to be called, put some efficiency into our court system, and those police officers, instead of wasting their time in a courtroom waiting for a case to be heard, can be in and out and back on the street. It's a simple formula.

What about the witnesses, those individuals who feel that, first of all, it's their duty to testify? Often they're called from out of town. They lose their day on the job, they have travel expenses, they show up in court, and the case is never heard. And they're called back, often repeatedly. What is the signal that people are getting about our justice system? When I talk about witnesses, I'm also talking about victims of that particular incident. What are we saying to them about our justice system in this province? I'll tell you what they are saying. They're saying, "It's not working."

We have a responsibility to ensure not only that we pass legislation such as the bill before us today, but we have the important responsibility of ensuring that the laws that we pass here can be appropriately and effectively enforced—not only enforced by our front-line police officers, who we celebrate for the work that they do, but then that they are also appropriately dealt with in an efficient justice system through courts that are properly resourced so that the right decisions then can be made and the consequences of this legislation can be fully realized, both by the victims as well as those who have made the irresponsible decisions to engage in either street racing or drinking and driving.

With that, I conclude my remarks. I do want to, just in closing, express my appreciation for everyone who has been involved in bringing this legislation to the point where we are now at third and final reading and, subject to the vote yet to take place, to be enacted. It's the right thing to do. It is a solid piece of legislation that we can all support and will. It is a good day in this place. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Ms. DiNovo:** I listened with interest to the member from Oak Ridges, always an impassioned speaker, particularly about this area, where he has had unfortunate first-hand experience and also has had the intelligence to put forward a needed amendment.

There are a few questions still, though. I would like to ask him about the ignition interlock system, because I'm not completely familiar with it. It strikes me that one of the aspects that perhaps might be a little weak in this bill is the disarming or overriding of that system. I would be interested in hearing his comments about the possibility, for example, of getting somebody else to breathe into that system before you drive off in your car. Again, it would be interesting to hear his comments about how you would get around that, because you know that those who are so inclined will try everything they can to get around it.



There are also problems of enforcement that I touched on before. Again, with an overworked, understaffed police force, certainly when you see some of the cars on the roads—the Ferraris, the Porsches, the others—you know that most people who buy those cars do not buy them with the hopes and expectations of always going under the speed limit. I think of our poor police officers and what they contend with. These are not roads that are set up specifically for racing; these are our highways and byways. You've all seen them zipping in and out, risking other people's lives.

Finally there are two federal pieces of legislation that I would be interested in comment upon: One is C-32, and one is C-19, both under the Criminal Code. C-32, MADD has asked that this be passed very quickly; they just sent out a release on Mother's Day. My concern about this Bill 203, although we support it, is that it might, in effect, play into the hands of those who would plea bargain their way out of a civil offence, into a provincial offence out of a criminal charge. Certainly, we all in this House want to see those who commit crimes charged criminally.

1630

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** I want to take a couple of minutes to commend and thank the member from Oak Ridges for his speech, but also for his good work in this area. I would like to remind all of us that several private members' bills helped to compile the end story on this bill. The member from Simcoe North, I believe, worked very hard on the interlock system; Chatham-Kent-Essex; Thunder Bay-Atikokan—I offered the doubling of the fines in his private member's bill back when I was in opposition. I believe that doubling the fine in a construction zone should take place. There was a tremendous amount of thought by an awful lot of the members put into how to make our roads safer and how to improve the circumstances, because we know that it's a dangerous place to be. Even though statistically—and I say this with respect—Ontario has probably the safest roads around, we still need to make them safer, and I agree with him.

I also wanted to thank him for mentioning Ms. Seggie. She's a constituent of mine from Brantford. It was her son who was killed. I met with her; we talked about the petitions, the walk and everything else that she's done. I supported her wholeheartedly and I thank the member for offering his thanks to her for her dedication. Particularly when you lose a son—that is not supposed to happen. He was 21 years old, Matthew Power. When I say his age, one might assume that he was involved in racing, but guess what? He was simply crossing the street. That's all he was doing, just crossing the street. Wrong place, wrong time.

For these idiots out there who are doing those things for the thrill of it, I want to ask those street racers: Do you think it's a thrill to take somebody's life, because you think it's neat? I commend everybody in this House for saying: "We're not going to take it." And I commend all of those people out there who have worked tirelessly for a long time to get to this point. My congratulations to

each and every one of you. I'm proud of this House for doing this type of legislation.

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** I too would like to congratulate my friend and colleague the member from Oak Ridges and, in this case, the Minister of Transportation, Donna Cansfield. A need was perceived by my friend from Oak Ridges, who initiated a bill regarding initiation of higher penalties for speeding. The need was there and he attempted to meet it with his private bill. He was joined by other private bills by other members of this House. The government, in particular the Minister of Transportation, recognized that need and acted swiftly to do something about it. As a result, we are at third reading on a bill that had input from many of our members from both sides of this House.

For once, if I might say so, the system seems to have worked, because we even had an amendment that was accepted by all persons on the committee, whether they belonged to the official opposition, the third party or the government. They recognized that this amendment did make sense and they acted on it. That's the way system is supposed to work. Unfortunately, in 90% of the cases, it does not work in the spirit of co-operation and partnership which has taken place here.

So I think all persons should be congratulated in regard to this bill. Our aim is merely and mostly to save lives. I think this bill will save the lives of innocent individuals in the future, and that is to be commended.

**Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent-Essex):** I'm pleased to rise and add my comments. I did make some comments at second reading on this particular bill. It's a very worthwhile endeavour put forward by the Minister of Transportation and I commend her for her hard work and consultation in bringing this forth. I do know that in my riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex, the issue of drinking and driving is a topic of conversation that people raise often, and I know that they're pleased with the new initiatives that the minister has put forward to deal with this very issue. Interlock systems are something that people recognize as a valuable tool in trying to bring about some kind of sanctions against people who, for one reason or another, continue to drink and drive. It is very disconcerting that people don't seem to understand this very dangerous habit that they have.

Street racing, I've mentioned in the past, is not a particular issue in my riding, but that doesn't mean it would not exist. There are places throughout Chatham-Kent Essex that have these white lines on the road that seem to me would indicate you start here and about a quarter mile from that you end. They do exist, but it's not an overriding issue. But it can be in certain areas of the province, and the minister has addressed that.

The issue of justices of the peace was raised. I know that our minister is working diligently at that, trying to rectify any concerns that people might have about the numbers of JPs here in Ontario. There's real good work going on in that regard.

At the committee hearings I saw a video put forward by the police showing us the advantage of having blue



lights on cars. It really is quite amazing how well they can be seen in certain conditions over red lights, so I'm pleased that this is also included in the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Oak Ridges, you have two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Klees:** I want to thank the member for Parkdale–High Park, the member for Brant, the member for Cambridge and the member for Chatham–Kent Essex for their comments.

In summary with regard to the street racing issue, here is what this legislation, when passed, will do. It will empower our front-line police officers to deal with street racing on the spot. It empowers them to issue on-the-spot licence suspension for those they suspect have been involved in street racing. It will empower them to issue on-the-spot impoundment of the vehicle that they suspect has been involved in that activity. It increases fines and it increases jail terms significantly so that the message is there very clearly that, while you may choose to be irresponsible, if you are, there will be serious consequences to you.

Finally with regard to the nitrous oxide component, this legislation will ensure that anyone who does have nitrous oxide equipment in the car—it must be not be connected on a public highway. The connection must be clear both externally and internally on the car so that any police officer or emergency worker can see whether or not nitrous oxide is present. Again, any transgression of that is going to have serious consequences.

In closing, I want to thank my colleagues for their support for this legislation. We look forward, as I've indicated previously, not only to having the law in place but that the Attorney General ensure that our courts are resourced so that this law can be fully enforced.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** It's my pleasure to address the assembly on this issue this afternoon. For those who have joined us and for our new guests who have just come into the gallery, we're debating today Bill 203, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Remedies for Organized Crime and Other Unlawful Activities Act, 2001, and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

This bill, at its heart, is not a controversial bill in this Legislature. You've heard the member for Oak Ridges and the member for Ottawa–Orléans speak about the matters before us dealing with drunk driving, dealing with changes in regulations or legislation regarding lights that can be used by vehicles on the roads and dealing with street racing. Those matters are, generally speaking, ones that all those in the House agree have to be dealt with and, for the most part, they are comfortable with the direction that's set out here.

What I want to say, however, is that this act on its own without a larger context will not deal with all of the issues that are before us, will not deal with the full range of human and social costs that arise from these activities, because no act without action in a variety of areas can in fact deal with addiction and drunkenness, can in fact deal

with the sorts of irresponsible and dangerous behaviour that we see in street racing. So when we talk about Bill 203, we need to talk about the larger context of actions that have to be taken in this society to protect ourselves and to protect other members of our community.

**1640**

I had an opportunity about two weeks ago to go on a walk with the Hellenic Home for the Aged supporters in Scarborough. There's a gentleman who's quite central to the development of Hellenic Homes for the Aged, a Dr. Oreopoulos, well known in the Greek community and a very thoughtful man. In the course of the walk, the four or five kilometres we walked to raise money for the Hellenic homes, we had a talk about the health care system and the problems that he faced. It was interesting to me. The problems that he was talking about, the difficulties he was facing as someone who managed patients who needed dialysis, were very similar to the issues that we are facing in this bill. He deals with dialysis patients day in, day out. He sees a constant group coming in. He sees people getting sicker. He sees people who die from the complications related to kidney failure. When I asked him what needed to be done, his first response wasn't, "I need more dialysis." He said, "What I need is people to take action on those sources, those causes, that damage people's internal organs, that damage their kidneys." Forty-five per cent of his patients are people who have developed diabetes. He said, "That's where we need to go. We need action to deal with that source problem, that root problem, so that I'm not dealing with it at the tail end." It was very clear that diabetes was a problem that not only caused people to have kidney failure and brought them to his office, but that provided unwanted work to cardiologists, vascular surgeons, to people who dealt with a wide range of human health problems—urologists. He wanted us to get at the root.

Here again, when we look at the problems that we have with people dying on the roads, Bill 203 tries to deal with drunkenness; it tries to deal with dangerous and irresponsible behaviour. But it's very clear from looking at the statistics that relate to Canadian injuries and to Canadian deaths that a big part of our problem is simply the fact that our society—our cities, our towns—is structured in a way that people have to drive, and they have to drive a lot. So even before we go to this issue of drunk driving and street racing, if far more people could reliably travel on foot or on transit, then these risks would be substantially reduced. The number of deaths of people riding on public transit is negligible. The number of deaths of people injured by streetcars, buses or subway trains is negligible. But the more cars we have on the road and the more kilometres we have to drive, then clearly the more risk there is for people. That's a crucial first piece, that change in our mode of transportation so that there's less risk in the first place.

It was interesting to see some statistics recently from Canada Mortgage and Housing cited by the columnist John Barber in the *Globe and Mail*. John wasn't thinking



about Bill 203 when he wrote, but he noted that for people who lived in Markham, their greenhouse gas emissions were twice those of people who lived in downtown Toronto, primarily because they drove a lot more. So it isn't just that people are causing environmental problems; they are at greater risk from the low-density development that we encourage, that we fund, that we enable in every way, shape and form. I think if we're going to have a comprehensive program, and if we're going to see this Bill 203, this legislation, be part of that comprehensive program to deal with these injuries and deaths which plague our society, then we have to think about that bigger picture of more pedestrian-friendly, more transit-related cities.

We also have to invest in our children to prevent addiction, something I commented on when I spoke at second reading and I want to comment on again. When you deal with people who are drunk drivers, you are dealing with people, very commonly, who have problems with alcohol. I'll delve into this further in the speech, but one of the correlations that you find when you look at studies of drunk driving in North America is that the jurisdictions that have the largest Alcoholics Anonymous programs tend to have the least problem with drunk driving. They have adult addiction reduction programs that have an impact, more so than policing. That is a positive factor that reduces death from drunk driving.

If we want to deal with adults—and through Bill 203, we're trying to deal with adults in a punitive way, and I think that has to be there. But if we want to deal with it in a preventive way, we also have to deal with children and children's mental health. When you look at what causes addiction in people, I've had reason recently to talk to a doctor in my riding who deals with people who have addictions beyond alcohol, and time and time and time again what he finds is that those addictions are rooted in childhood abuse, a childhood lack of warmth or caring in the home, or a childhood feeling of being at risk, threatened. We need to invest in those children so that later on we are not faced with a situation where we lose our lives or our children lose their lives because of someone's addiction leading to drunk driving.

I was at an event in my riding on Sunday, the dedication of a park to a young man, Kempton Howard, who was shot to death in the Blake-Boulton neighbourhood in 2003. His death had nothing to do with driving, but the pain that was evident at that event reminded me of the human toll that is paid when people lose their parents, their children, their grandparents. What we deal with here today is of great consequence, is of great substance. So when I say that this bill needs to be part of a larger constellation of efforts, it is because I know that the toll, the price, is extraordinarily high.

In the action that's taken on those who engage in street racing, there is a part of the solution. But another part of that solution has got to be programs, social marketing that changes the culture so that people don't think, as the member for Brantford was saying, that it's wonderful or neat or cool to be engaged in an activity that threatens the lives of people all over.

That comprehensive approach is what's needed if we're going to take the next step forward. The member for Oak Ridges was correct and the member for Niagara Centre was correct in comments made today, and that is that we can put in place as many laws as we want—in fact, we should enact laws—but until we have the enforcement capability to make those laws come to life so that people are arrested when they're behaving in a way that's dangerous, so that action can be taken as is expected by the drafters of this legislation, we won't have happen what has to happen.

I talk to parole officers in my riding. They deal day in, day out with people who break parole conditions. Those of us who are not part of the criminal justice system, of the enforcement system, tend to think that if you break parole, you go to jail. Normally, the sentence for breaking conditions of parole is that you get more parole, which causes tremendous frustration on the part of parole officers but, frankly, also says to people who have flouted the law that really it's not a big deal. So bringing in tougher legislation in and of itself is something that's useful, but without enforcement, without the machinery and the mechanism there to make it actually have an impact on people's lives, it will mean that we aren't going to have the impact we want.

1650

Let's take a look, if we can, at the human cost this bill hopes to address. In 2004, the injury surveillance program, Health Canada, put out a study, Road Safety in Canada. They talk about the reality that in Canada, one of the largest countries in the world, we have a population density across the country that's very small. Frankly, even here in the GTA we're in a situation where public transportation is limited and, as I've said, where people have to rely on their cars. Because they rely on their cars, because they don't have transit systems to rely on, we rely more heavily than most other jurisdictions in the world on private motor vehicles. In fact, we had in 2004 almost 19 million vehicles on our roads—21 million drivers on 900,000 kilometres of road.

One of the fallouts from that reality is that we have a large number of collisions. Even if everyone were a good driver, if people didn't get drunk, if there was no street racing, we'd still have collisions and deaths. Simply, with that number of objects moving around, on occasion they're going to bump into each other. We have a large number of fatalities and we have a large number of collisions that result in hospitalization.

In 2001, there were almost 2,000 deaths in Canada from motor vehicle collisions. There were 24,400 hospital-related admissions that resulted from traffic collisions. Many of the victims are young. Traffic collisions are a leading cause of premature death and disability in this country. That's a big impact: thousands of people in hospitals and thousands dead from an activity and a mode of transportation that we rely on. So it makes sense that we take action to try and deal with those fatalities, to deal with those injuries. When we do



take that action, we need to make it as effective as we possibly can.

Vehicle occupants account for approximately three quarters of all road users killed and seriously injured during the year. The remaining victims are vulnerable pedestrians, motorcyclists and bicyclists, but the bulk—three quarters—are occupants of motor vehicles. When we talk about road safety, we're talking about an issue that touches on life-and-death issues for large numbers of people in this country.

In this study that was released in 2004, the health care costs, property losses and other factors were put together, and I assume there was an accounting model that looked at the annual cost in Canada from collisions on highways. It put the cost in the range of \$25 billion for the country as a whole. That's an extraordinary expenditure. Twenty-five billion dollars is a huge loss of wealth, a huge drain on this country's economy. We have a responsibility to address a loss at that level.

When you look at other developed, industrialized countries within the OECD, Canada has the fifth-lowest rate of traffic deaths per billion vehicle miles travelled. That's a good thing. I wish we were at the absolute lowest, but we're the fifth lowest. We have the 13th-lowest rate when measured as deaths per 100,000. Our rates in death of injury are comparable to those of other developed countries. In other words, we're not a particularly bad player. We're not an outrageous country in terms of loss compared to others, but we have a significant burden. We in this Legislature, we in this province, have a responsibility to take action. Bill 203 addresses part of that. As I said at the beginning of the speech, there are other things that need to be put in place so that this act can contribute to the overall improvement of safety on our roads.

Since 1982, the death rate on highways in Canada has declined by about 50%. That's pretty impressive. That has happened even while we've had a very significant increase in the number of cars and people on the roads. I think that's an achievement that we should recognize as admirable. This country has seen that there's a problem and has actually made the investments in the design of cars and the regulations to keep people safe. I note that a variety of governments have brought in the regulations needed to make that happen. No one party, no one government, can claim particular virtue; it has been across the board. The biggest difference, the biggest impacts on mortality have been things like mandating seat belts, child restraints, more stringent drinking and driving laws, public education, more enforcement campaigns, safer vehicles overall and investments in road infrastructure. All these things together have meant fewer people killed on the road and fewer people injured on the road. But we still have rates of death and injury that are high and are not acceptable to us, not acceptable to this society, not acceptable to our voters, to our constituents and to our families and friends, and we need to move forward to go beyond that 50% reduction to continue reducing the risks to our health and to our lives.

When you look at the stats that bear directly on the context of this bill, drivers account for more than half of all road users killed. You can look at a variety of things that lead to deaths: driver inexperience, health limitations, health limitations amongst elderly drivers, single-vehicle crashes on undivided rural roads—often connected to drinking—and, obviously, non-use of seat belts. In fact, approximately 40% of all fatally injured occupants are unrestrained. Beyond those, we have questions of alcohol and excessive speed that are recognized as important contributing factors in many collisions.

It's interesting that 40% of all fatally injured occupants are unrestrained. We have a law in place and there are a number of jurisdictions that have laws in place, but we still have large numbers of people driving around without their seat belts on, driving around without occupants of their cars having seat belts on. We need to ensure that those laws are enforced, that what we already have on the books are pressed in place so that we further reduce the loss of lives and health.

The two groups that are at greatest risk are people at either end of the age spectrum. Youth aged 16 to 19 and elderly drivers 75 years and over have significantly higher death rates than those in the middle—for youth, 27 deaths per billion kilometres travelled, and for the elderly, 20 deaths per billion kilometres. In a number of provinces, we've taken action on young drivers, introducing graduated licensing programs, which have proven effective in reducing collisions. We've taken action on people who are drinking and driving, which is one of the central pieces of this bill, Bill 203.

We have to know that we've seen a decrease in the number of people killed because of drinking and driving. It's much less now than it was a decade ago. It's a good thing. We've had cultural change. We've had enforcement. We've had the RIDE program in Toronto. We've had action by police forces that see this as a significant problem, not as a minor issue.

We have a proposal in this bill that we'll be voting on: use of the alcohol ignition interlock, which actually was discussed a number of years ago. We have proposals in the act for programs for rehab, training and assessment that have been introduced in other jurisdictions. Those are things that we have to do here. I think they should have been done earlier. I think that years have gone by when they could have been in place, but they're here.

#### 1700

In 2001, Ontario reported the lowest fatality rate in Canada, so obviously something has been right over the last few decades. We've been headed in the right direction. In 2001, we had the lowest number of people dying on the road than any previous year since 1950, even though in that year 845 people died. So, consistent with what has been said by the minister in the past, we're seeing improvements.

There are a number of factors in Ontario that are directly related to fatalities and injuries: 149, or 18%, of Ontario road fatalities in 2001 involved speeding, going above the speed limit, going too fast for conditions; 72



fatalities involved drivers who failed to yield the right of way; and a number involved drivers who disobeyed traffic controls. Speeding—a very significant factor. Even setting aside the whole question of street racing, speeding itself is a significant risk factor. From 2001 to 2004, we've continued to see drops in road fatalities. In fact, drinking and driving fatalities in Ontario decreased by more than 10% between 2001 and 2004. We're continuing to see that improvement in safety conditions on Ontario roads, and it's to our advantage to keep that rolling along.

But when we talk about this bill, let's keep in mind very clearly that we're not talking about simple administrative or clerical matters, that we're not talking just dollars and cents, though that's certainly there; as I've said, we're talking about lives. We're talking about deaths and tragedies that come to families. There's a huge personal cost.

There's an organization called Transport 2000 that earlier in this decade tried to put a more personal face on the issues that our society was confronting. They talked about spine and brain injuries arising from vehicle crashes. They didn't want to just spend their time on the numbers, although that was part of their study; they actually did case studies of people's lives and what happened to them as a result of being involved in traffic accidents.

Their focus, their goal, was to see a much greater investment in transit and rail to get people out of cars. But their findings, their study, were useful to us nonetheless in what we're debating today.

They talked about the level of deaths, about 840 fatalities a year and 82,000 injuries per year. Obviously, not everyone who is injured requires hospitalization. That is a lot of injuries and a lot of people suffering in the course of a year, and a \$25-billion cost to Canada as a whole for injuries and fatalities on roads. When you look at Ontario alone, they cited a 1990 study of \$9 billion as the burden on Ontario's economy. That's quite substantial: About 10% of the provincial budget is the cost that we carry, the burden that we carry, from fatalities and injuries related to traffic accidents.

When they talked about the numbers, their arguments were impressive enough, strong enough, but they talked about, as I said, individuals whose cases they traced through spinal cord injuries and brain injuries. These are stories of people whose lives were turned upside down, people who'd gone from being athletes in tremendous shape, competitors, people who were at the peak of their health, who were rendered paraplegic because of these accidents; people who'd gone from being full-time mothers looking after their children to having to be looked after themselves; people who had been fully employed who could no longer work; people whose lives had been full and who had had them essentially taken away from them, who'd been put into limbo.

Even though the numbers are declining, even though things have been improving over the last few decades in Ontario, the price that individuals have to pay, the price

that families have to pay and the price that society as a whole has to pay is extremely high. We need to look at these measures to see what can be done. So what's in the bill before us? What are we being asked to vote for? What changes were made in committee? What has come back to us?

In the bill, the first section is giving the government increased authority to impose fees for administration costs for impaired driving and road racing. There's authority to impose consequences when fees or penalties are not paid. That was remarked on by those speaking earlier this afternoon. There are exemptions from payment under certain circumstances. Those circumstances will be set out in regulation, and I look forward to seeing those introduced soon. It's important for the minister to make sure that we, as legislators, know very soon exactly what those regulations are so that we have a full sense of what this legislation is actually going to accomplish.

Bill 203 provides for increased roadside suspension of licences of impaired drivers. Police can stop vehicles and do a breath test with an approved calibrated screening device or instrument. If the blood alcohol concentration is .05 alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood—that's .05 in the course of this debate. If those levels are detected and indicated by a "warn" or "alert" diagnosis, the roadside officer can suspend the licence of the person who's been pulled over. The blood alcohol threshold for suspension has been reduced from .08 to .05. I think there's general agreement in the House that it makes sense to do that. We don't see any good reason to have people continue dying on our roads because some have been drinking and then have gone driving. It makes sense to us that action be taken.

The period of suspension for those who are found to be violating the standard is, for the first offence, three days, for the second offence seven days and the third offence 30 days. It's interesting that previous suspensions won't be considered if they occurred five or more years previously. Whether this is material or whether it weakens our bill, I'm not sure. It's a fair length of time. But it's interesting that the officer may also impound the vehicle of an impaired driver at the expense of the owner of the vehicle. It makes sense to me and it makes sense to most people in this House. If you're irresponsible and you've been out drinking, if you're putting yourself and the lives of others at risk, then it makes sense to me that not only should you be suspended but that your vehicle should be impounded. I think you'll probably find a fair amount of support for this in the House and for these measures as this bill goes forward, and there was certainly that support in the committee.

It should be noted that even if people have their licence suspended three times at the roadside, there's no guarantee that there will be a conviction after that. Obviously, the judge has the discretion to decide who will and will not be convicted. We should know that the more severe penalties don't flow automatically from these simple suspensions. As I understand it, if they flowed automatically from these simple suspensions,



there would be a substantial legal challenge to the act, so we have to live with what we have. There's no certainty that a repeat offender will lose driving privileges over the long term. That's something the minister or the minister's representatives can speak to as we go through this third reading.

If a driver is convicted, then licence suspension is increased: first conviction, one year; second conviction, three years; and third conviction, indefinitely. It was noted earlier in this debate that the bill provides for an ignition interlock condition that will make it easier for offenders to apply to get their licences back early. If they agree to a conduct review program along with this interlock installation, they may actually be able to get their licences back. The interlock device, as it was explained, is a device that analyzes the breath of the driver before they put the key in the ignition, before they're allowed to drive away. It would be interesting to have commentary from the government side about the penalties should one override or disable in some way that mechanism.

1710

There have been a lot of comments on this bill, and one of the comments provided to us before committee hearings was a letter from Mothers Against Drunk Driving. I just want to read their letter into the record.

"May 3, 2007

"Dear committee members:

"Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD Canada) wishes to express its support for Bill 203 and, at the same time, raise certain issues that disappoint our organization relating to very important driving safety initiatives not found within this legislation."

So there's no question that Mothers Against Drunk Driving, one of the pre-eminent road safety groups in this country, wants to see this kind of legislation move forward, this comprehensive approach to drinking and driving problems, but they feel that the bill could have gone further, could have been substantially stronger.

"Foremost, MADD Canada supports the legislation," as I said, "and hopes to see Bill 203 passed before the Ontario Legislature recesses."

"However, we are disappointed that the government did not take this opportunity to enhance its graduated licence program with a zero BAC"—that's blood alcohol content—"limit for new drivers for five years. Other jurisdictions like Manitoba and Nova Scotia have introduced zero-BAC-for-five-years laws. Zero and low BAC limits have been introduced for all drivers under 21 in the United States and this has resulted in significant reductions in impaired driving fatalities."

I'd like to ask the government representatives, when they address this matter: Why didn't they take the steps, why didn't they adopt the approach of other jurisdictions to further reduce the deaths that we will see in our young people? Why did they not simply adopt those laws that have proven themselves to be effective in other jurisdictions? To me, it makes tremendous sense that we would simply copy them. So I'd like the government to

address this issue when they speak again. Why did you not take the steps that were recommended by Mothers Against Drunk Driving? Why did you not take the steps that have proven to be effective in other jurisdictions?

"In MADD Canada's report *Youth and Impaired Driving in Canada: Opportunities for Change*, we make a compelling case for introducing enhanced graduated licensing programs and a zero-BAC limit for five years. Here are the facts:

"—Despite the progress that has been made, young drivers are still dramatically overrepresented in alcohol-related fatalities. While 16- to 25-year-olds constitute only 13.7% of the Canadian population, they account for 32.1% of the alcohol-related traffic fatalities"—32%. That's double their numbers in the population—very high.

There's an obvious solution in legislation that has been adopted and put in place in other jurisdictions and that we could have used here in Ontario, that should have been in the bill and was not.

"—Young people have the highest reported rates of daily, weekly and monthly heavy drinking, and binge drinking. They also have high reported rates of driving after drinking and being a passenger in a vehicle of a drinking driver.

"—While 2002 per capita rates of federal impaired driving charges are relatively low among 16- to 17-year-olds, they rose sharply among 18- to 20-year-olds, peaked among 21-year-olds, and then fell gradually with age."

The last point:

"—Traffic crashes remain the largest single cause of death among Canadian youth, accounting for almost one third of all deaths. Even conservatively estimated, over 45% of these traffic deaths are alcohol-related."

This is information that was available, that could have been introduced to the bill, should have been introduced to the bill. Mothers Against Drunk Driving—actually, Andrew Murie, their chief executive officer—goes on, "Extensive research from Canada and abroad establishes that zero-BAC limits for new drivers significantly decreases alcohol-related traffic deaths among this vulnerable population."

On another matter, Mothers Against Drunk Driving Canada "had also hoped the government would have followed the advice of its own transportation officials in extending the administrative drivers' licence suspension period to seven days, not to 72 hours as proposed.... 'Ontario's officials participated in a national review of most effective licence suspension practices....'"

So our people know about this. Our people in Ontario are well aware of practices in other jurisdictions and the opportunities that those jurisdictions have pointed out for reducing fatalities, for reducing injuries.

"There was a consensus that longer driver licence suspensions were needed to effectively alter a drinking driver's behaviour. All provincial and territorial officials recognized seven days as a meaningful suspension period."



I think the government responsible for this legislation, having sent its officials to take part in these discussions, should speak to why they didn't take more effective action.

"Although it is good to see the government announcing a 72-hour licence suspension, we hope that eventually Ontario and the remaining jurisdictions across Canada will implement the recommended seven-day licence suspension for impaired driving."

So on one hand, Mothers Against Drunk Driving Canada is very pleased to see this legislation being so quickly dealt with by the committee and hopefully passed by the Legislature in the weeks ahead. On the other hand, the legislation could have had a greater impact on reducing impaired driving on Ontario roads had it contained a zero-BAC limit for new drivers for five years and a seven-day administrative driver's licence suspension period. The opportunities were there; our officials were aware of it. I assume that the minister's office was aware of it. The government did not bring it forward.

"If there are any questions MPPs may have regarding Mothers Against Drunk Driving Canada's policy comments, please don't hesitate to contact their national office."

"Sincerely, Andrew Murie, chief executive officer, Mothers Against Drunk Driving Canada."

Mothers Against Drunk Driving has endorsed the act with some very heavy qualifications. They see the value in taking this legislative action, they see the need for this legislative action, but they also see opportunities that were missed, opportunities that should have been taken by this government, that should have gone further, should have been more effective so that the number of tragedies and the dollar volume of costs that we're dealing with that arise from those tragedies would be substantially reduced.

One of the things that I came across in the course of preparing for this debate was a piece of research done that the Addiction Research Foundation had posted on their website, and it was entitled Factors Influencing Aggregate Indicators of Drinking-Driving in the United States, which is a bit of a long title, but what these researchers have done—and I alluded to this earlier in my speech—was they looked at the drinking-driving statistics in a number of jurisdictions in the United States during the period from 1982 to 1990. What they tried to do was look at all the different factors that interacted, all the different factors that had an influence on drunk driving statistics to see what were the steps that made a difference, what were the actions that made a difference.

When you look at those statistics, a clear picture of the kinds of actions that actually provided relief on highways were teased out by the researchers. Their goal was, obviously, to reduce the staggering burden of human and financial cost. They looked at a number of items like specific efforts to prevent drinking and driving or other alcohol-related problems.

1720

They admitted in their study that they often found it difficult to get data. They looked at different prevention-

relevant measures. They looked at traffic fatality rates. They looked at per capita consumption of alcohol and the rates of drinking-driving arrests. They looked at the levels of alcohol abuse treatment in the different jurisdictions and at AA membership. They looked at the numbers in these periods and how different programs actually gave answers to legislators and decision-makers like those of us here today dealing with this bill. What they found was that the total fatality rates were very much related, very much connected to per capita consumption of alcohol and drinking-driving arrest rates.

So if you have a society that is a heavy-drinking society, regardless of other factors, regardless of enforcement, you're going to have more drunk driving problems. It's interesting to me that there was a submission to the committee that heard this bill from Spirits Canada and they were concerned about drunk driving. It's clear there is a general acceptance that there needs to be moderation in drinking. There is a general acceptance that drinking and driving is not culturally acceptable.

One of the things they found that was interesting was that membership in Alcoholics Anonymous had a definite correlation with reduced drunk driving fatalities and injuries in the societies that they were studying.

It's interesting to see this because so much of the work that's done by Alcoholics Anonymous is done in not particularly well-funded circumstances. I go to public meetings in a church in my riding. The church is sparsely well maintained but not luxurious, and the folks from AA meet in the basement. I know others in my riding who have done their best to fight addictions of all kinds and, generally speaking, these efforts are not well funded. But it's very clear that if we want to deal with health care costs, if we want to deal with property loss, if we want to prevent tragedies in families, that adequately resourcing adult addiction treatment and prevention is key, is a highly effective measure and something that we have to do.

When this study looked at the impact of enforcement and deterrent activities, they found a much weaker relationship than they expected. They noted that in places where there were more arrests for drinking and driving, that tended to reflect the fact there was a very high level of drinking and driving. The number of arrests didn't necessarily drive down the overall incidents of drinking and driving. That doesn't mean to say that we shouldn't enforce. Obviously, if there are people out there who are drunk in cars, we should be trying to get them off the road. But it's the preventive step that has the bigger impact.

We have to look beyond the deterrence effect that we expect to see from this act. We have to go beyond that to invest, first of all, in our children so that they are raised in a way that doesn't predispose them towards addiction. Then we have to invest in programs that reduce adult addiction so that far fewer people are out there getting drunk and driving. So I would say, proceed with the tougher penalties that are outlined in this bill. I would say that impounding cars makes sense and making sure



people aren't driving around, but invest in the other matters as well.

In Canada, \$25 billion a year; in Ontario, \$9 billion a year—that's a cost. In Ontario, of that \$9 billion a year, roughly a third of those costs are related to drinking and driving: \$3 billion a year. If you think, for several hundred million a year—and I'm just picking a number out of the air, but a number much smaller than \$3 billion—you could be driving very effective addiction rehabilitation programs in this province. When I talk to people who work in the addictions field, they're constantly telling me about waiting lists for people to be taken care of. They're constantly telling me about the lack of resources. Yet we pay for that lack of resourcing very directly: in deaths and dismemberments on the road, in direct dollars.

The first really major part of this bill deals with drunk driving; I've had a chance to address that. The second part of this bill deals with street racing. I think it was a very good thing that the opposition introduced an amendment to the bill on the use of nitrous oxide to make cars perform at a much higher level; really, to supercharge them so that for street racing they would be far more competitive vehicles. I think that the opposition was entirely responsible in introducing that amendment and I'm glad that all three parties were able to support it in the clause-by-clause because, frankly, who in this House can defend a technology that underwrites, that supports, that encourages people to drive recklessly and irresponsibly?

We've talked about the overall human cost of street racing. We've talked about the larger context within which a safety program has to exist. But street racing itself does exact a human toll. Last year the CBC did a very big piece of research on street racing in Canada. It's a phenomenon that has been a problem for decades here in Toronto. We've had something like 35 deaths in Ontario since 1999. In terms of the hundreds who die every year on the road in Ontario, it's a smaller number. But for those who are victims of it and those who are aware of those who have been victims, it's particularly horrifying.

It's interesting, in the course of this past weekend, when I was at the event that I referred to earlier—the commemoration of a death of a young man in my riding—I had an opportunity to talk to the local police superintendent about street racing and his experience. He's with the division downtown. There is some street racing downtown, but much more of it is seen in the suburbs where you have wide roads, straight runs and far fewer cars. One thing he said to me—he's a fairly straightforward guy; I assume he was telling me the truth—he said that he has talked to his colleagues who have seen 400-series highways essentially taken over by street racers, where racers will block cars coming on on the entry ramps and block other cars on the road, which slow down and eventually stop so that the racers can just zoom ahead on an empty highway, which I find extraordinary—absolutely extraordinary. I think it's madness enough on an avenue like Steeles or Finch or

Sheppard, one of those wide, car-oriented streets in the northern part of the city where people would irresponsibly go forward, but to shut down a highway for this says that this problem is far bigger than I had thought in the past.

1730

There's no question that in this society we have a culture of powerful cars moving at very high speeds. It's fed in movies; it's fed in video games; sometimes, frankly, it's fed in advertisements for new cars. You can watch, any night on television, cars going at extraordinary speeds with a warning just faintly across the bottom of the screen saying, "Closed course; professional driver. Do not do this." It's sort of like those bits of advice we used to have on television shows for kids—"Kids, don't do this at home"—when you'd see someone do something particularly dangerous and stupid. We have a cultural problem that leads to a physical problem, a physical problem of people driving very dangerously in races on our streets. We know that it isn't just a question of statistics when we talk about people dying on our roadways; there are names, there are faces, there are people.

In 2002, RCMP Constable Jimmy Ng was killed instantly when a car that was involved in street racing came through a light and hit him. It rammed his car; he died on the spot. He was a young man. He was doing his job, a job that was necessary in this society, and for no good reason, died. He was killed out of stupidity. We all feel the human impact of that kind of loss.

Closer to home—the member from Oak Ridges spoke to this earlier—Rob and Lisa Manchester died in a suspected street racing incident in May 2006, just north of Toronto. They left behind their seven-year-old daughter. They had been out celebrating their 17th wedding anniversary.

It's clear that there are very disturbing, very troubling tragedies that arise out of this kind of behaviour, and clearly, we in this Legislature have to take action to the extent that it's possible to root it out, to end it, to stop it. There are actions that have been taken here in Ontario. There's a program called ERASE, Eliminate Racing Activities on Streets Everywhere. That's a joint project of a variety of police departments that are trying to deal with this problem. When you contact them about their experience, they say simply that in Ontario, the number of people dying from street racing is rising.

In Canada as a whole, there's not a specific law against street racing. There are penalties for speeding and for reckless driving. If someone is killed or injured, there are a number of Criminal Code sections that would apply: criminal negligence causing death, obviously; dangerous operation of a vehicle; criminal negligence causing bodily harm; and dangerous operation of a vehicle. But the reality—and this is quite disturbing—is that it's very unusual for street racers to be caught or to be, in any substantial way, penalized. Constable Taylor, who's working on the ERASE program, says that, to his knowledge, he knows of no "convicted street racer who's



served more than five months in jail.” That’s an astounding thought: No one who has been convicted of this crime that is potentially so deadly has been given more than five months in jail. I would say that for this Legislature and for this society, that’s not acceptable. You know that when you’re doing that, you’re putting a whole lot of people’s lives at risk.

One of the examples that has been cited by Constable Taylor from the ERASE program was noted by the CBC: “In November 2000, street racers in Vancouver killed 52-year-old Irene Thorpe, a pedestrian, and were convicted of criminal negligence causing death.” There were two teens involved and they were given conditional sentences of two years less a day and placed under house arrest. And rightly, this was a sentence that outraged people, because when you see this kind of irresponsible behaviour leading to the death of innocent people, no one has any sympathy for those who are engaged in that activity. No one thinks that they should simply be under house arrest.

We need to do things, as I said earlier, beyond simply punitive laws, beyond simply enforcement. We know that it’s often hard, frankly, to find those street racers. If a police officer sees two cars going at high speed down the street, it can be hard to establish whether or not they’re actually racing or just simply two cars going at high speed down the street. When you actually read the literature, so often the police say that they find out about racing afterwards. And far more often, I think, we find out about racing when a tragedy occurs, rather than it simply being caught in the course of it going on.

In Vancouver, one of the things they’re doing is redesigning streets. They’re putting up medians and curbs on narrow roads that were used for drag racing. So it simply became far more difficult physically to engage in these races.

One of the things that we’ve done here is put in the nitrous oxide section of this legislation. That’s something that has been done in BC, where they’re targeting drivers who have modified their cars, and those cars are subject to special police attention.

We need to assume that often we won’t catch people. We should assume that we have to get at the people who are doing this in the first place. One of those things that we need to do is counter-marketing. If film and video games and some car advertisements are promoting irresponsible driving, we need to invest in marketing to change people’s thinking.

There was an interesting article in the latest edition of *New Scientist* about a response called “reactance.” That’s the psychological process of people rejecting a message when it comes from a particular place: young people—anyone who’s lived with a teenager will know this—who will specifically do something because you tell them not to do it. If we’re actually going to change the culture, we have to do it in a far more sophisticated way than we’ve done with things like anti-smoking advertising, which in this society, when it’s aimed at young people, is, generally speaking, worse than laughably ineffective. It often

causes young people to feel defiant and to want to smoke. If we are actually going to engage in that cultural change, let’s do it intelligently so that we do it in a way that has an impact.

In the United States, there are a number of American police forces that have actually done things like set up drag strips in controlled areas so that they can get people off of the streets and out of areas where they will put innocent pedestrians at risk, get those young people away from areas where a lot of drinking will go on, and actually reduce the potential risk to the young people and to the population as a whole.

Speaker, we’re beginning to run low on time. I want to note that enforcement is going to be a problem. We have an ongoing difficulty with the fact that our police forces are overextended. I think the key issue here in dealing with overextension of police forces is changing the conditions that create crime in the first place so that there are far fewer crimes for the police to react to. I expect that will be far more cost-effective and, really, the better way to go. I want to emphasize that when we deal with this problem, this Bill 203 should be seen as a small part of a larger program. I call on this government and whichever government is in power after October 10 to look at this in a multidisciplinary way: to deal with addictions, to deal with adult addiction rehab, to deal with addiction prevention by investing in our children, to invest in development and densities in our cities that dramatically reduce the need for car travel and that increase the use of transit and foot traffic. We need to take action on cultural change, as I’ve just said.

I want to thank the Legislature for their patience in hearing my remarks, and I hope the government is willing to go further than this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I listened intently to the excellent speech from the member for Toronto–Danforth covering a number of issues that are contained in Bill 203.

I want to acknowledge a lady in Peterborough, Lily Rosebush. She was the founder of Peterborough Against Impaired Driving. A number of years ago, she lost her son. Her son was the victim of an impaired driver. After that, she took her time to organize a committee in Peterborough to look at ways to make our roads safer. She chatted with me on many occasions. She was in that courtroom when the drunk driver was going through the trial. She had to provide a victim’s impact statement on her and her remaining children, her family. It was always quite moving. She took that experience to be out in the community and other communities across Ontario to talk about drinking and driving and those irresponsible people who continue to participate in that activity.

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The key message in this bill is to crack down on drinking and driving and street racing, but I do want to compliment those organizations that encourage safe recreation racing in Ontario. I think of Brighton Speedway, operated by the family of the good member from



Northumberland, and Peterborough Speedway, which just recently had its 40th anniversary—venues in Ontario that provide a safe facility for recreational racing, something we should encourage.

Certainly we can see that there is a consensus building on this bill on all sides of the House. We heard Mr. Klees talk about it today, and now the member from Toronto–Danforth makes some very excellent points on how we have to get out and counter this business of drinking and driving each and every day to make our roads safer for all citizens in the province of Ontario.

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington):** It's my pleasure to address this bill. I want to thank the member from Oak Ridges for the kind of thought he put into the issues that need to be addressed here and thank the member from Toronto–Danforth for the excellent remarks he made.

Preventive ways of stopping senseless behaviour are a good thing to do, but when the behaviour actually occurs, the penalties must meet the crime. This bill is a good beginning to move in that direction. It is the right direction to move in.

In dealing with this bill, it's important to say that we must make sure there are the roadside licence suspensions, the on-the-spot impoundment of vehicles, the stiffer fines and stiffer jail sentences our residents have been asking for for years and years. These are the residents who have not been personally touched by the senseless acts that occur when both street racing and drunk driving occur. This is a good day for Mothers Against Drunk Driving, who have been taking up this cause for years and years. I want to particularly thank Stephanie Dooley, who has spearheaded the Halton Mothers Against Drunk Driving, for the work she has done to bring to us her personal experience so that those of us who have families and children don't have to suffer the same experience she did.

Increasing the minimum fines is a step in the right direction, increasing the time to stay in jail is the right direction, but I think we can go further.

**Ms. DiNovo:** I listened to the member from Toronto–Danforth and it was a privilege to do so; it always is. Many salient points were made in that hour-long lead. I want to focus on a couple of them briefly.

(1) It's fascinating to me that this is a province that does not have a drug strategy. Ontario does not have a drug strategy. In fact, the city of Toronto has a drug strategy, and a very excellent one. We in Parkdale–High Park have a round table trying to replicate that in our riding and perhaps do a template that we can bring forward to the province. But I think he absolutely touched on a nerve there and made some excellent points: that prevention of course is always the way to go, and the first step in prevention, one would think provincially, is to have a strategy to deal with addiction. We do not have a provincial strategy to deal with addiction.

(2) The other point is about deterrents. Certainly for young people—and we were all teenagers ones—deterrents are not what they're cracked up to be in terms of preventing crime. People who engage in antisocial and

sociopathic behaviour usually only stop when they get caught. It's getting caught that stops you from doing a crime, usually; it's not the threat of a deterrent. Herein lies the problem with this bill and why we would like to see it be a lot stronger, and that is, it's going to be very, very difficult to actually enforce this bill. Street racing is very sophisticated. You never know where they're going to do it or when they're going to do it. You've heard testimony to that. You've heard the member from Toronto–Danforth talk about how difficult it is to catch someone and then that they only had a five-month maximum penalty given to somebody street racing or extreme driving. This tells you that enforcement isn't working.

Hopefully, if I get a few minutes on this bill, I'd like to talk about that and, again, how we can move forward in a meaningful way to really prevent the deaths that are happening on our highways and byways.

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell):** I'm really pleased to hear that the member from Toronto–Danforth is supporting this bill. Let me tell you that I have lived quite an experience with street racing. Going back, on October 7, 1989, I was in my backyard washing my car with my nephew. His father had just purchased a car because Marc Charron was registered at the Ottawa university. He said, "Uncle, I'm just going to go for a drive on the main street." It just happened that all of a sudden we started to hear sirens. There was a gentleman who had stolen a car in front of the Giant Tiger. He was racing on the main street and all of a sudden the police started to chase these people, going around to the main highway and back on the main street. It ended up that my nephew was killed right on the spot, just driving slowly with his little dog in his car. Really, his father had just purchased the car so he could go to university. When I got the phone call at my place to go back about a kilometre from my place, that there was a very important issue that the people wanted to see me about, the people around the area knew that this kid came from my backyard and was washing up his car. But all of a sudden, there was this street racing and also a police chase.

Today, I see there are four main issues in the bill, but the thing that I'm really concerned about and about which I'm extremely happy is part four of section 58 of the bill, which will be repealed. It's very important today that we get an independent body looking after those incidents that do occur when they happen to a real innocent person who gets killed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Toronto–Danforth, you have two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Tabuns:** First of all, I want to thank those members from Peterborough, Burlington, Parkdale–High Park and Glengarry–Prescott–Russell for their comments on my lead.

The comments from the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell—obviously a very troubling and painful experience. I don't want anyone to go through that. I think we owe a lot to those who, like Mothers Against



Drunk Driving, have actually spoken out in society and have done what they could to change the culture of this society and move things forward.

I spoke to this at the beginning of my one hour, but I just want to mention again the event that I was at on Sunday—the renaming of Eastview Park to Kempton Howard Park in memory of the young man who was shot in my riding—with his mother, his grandmother, his brother and his neighbours. It's at those moments that the full weight of the loss is impressed upon you. It's at those moments that a distant statistic becomes very much a core, heartfelt loss. The loss that mothers and fathers across this country feel when their children—or nephews or nieces—are killed on our roads unnecessarily is extremely painful, very painful. It is incumbent on us to do what is within our bounds, politically and legislatively, to ensure that very few parents ever have to deal with this.

Joan Howard, who was there, talked about the day as bittersweet: bitter that she had lost her son; sweet that he was recognized and the park renamed. It's my hope that mothers will only have to deal with the sweet and not with the bitter, so I hope we take action to ensure that in future.

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**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Ms. DiNovo:** It's a privilege to speak for a few minutes on Bill 203. As I said at the outset, certainly we in the New Democratic Party are completely vested in making our streets safer places and, of course, vested in trying to prevent extreme driving in all its manifestations and ultimately trying to prevent death, because that's what this leads to.

I want to highlight first and foremost—we all spoke about some of the victims of these crimes. One name wasn't brought forward and I want to bring that forward: Tahir Khan. He was a Pakistani immigrant. He was a driver for Diamond Taxi who died in January 2006 and was killed by two young people around the age of 18 who were drag-racing up Mount Pleasant, of all places. They weren't even on a highway; this was an inner-city accident. This tragedy was compounded by the fact that he was just prepared to bring his family over from Pakistan and, of course, compounded by the fact he had worked so hard to get as far as he had, only to lose his life with such a senseless crime.

You heard also, of course, of Rob and Lisa Manchester leaving an orphan behind, the inspiration for the member for Oak Ridges's amendment and originally his private member's bill, and Adrienne Seggie, from the member for Brantford's riding, whose son Matthew Power died. Certainly many, many lives are lost. You heard from the member for Toronto–Danforth, who spoke at length about the fact that deaths are going down on our streets and we're becoming safer, but one death is one death too many. It's incumbent upon all of us to do everything we can to prevent even that one death.

I know, as a rural minister for two years after ordination, the cost of drinking and driving. In my first

year in the country I buried four young people. I and all the clergy from around the area inveighed upon our youth, "Please, if you've been drinking, don't drive. Phone us—2, 3, 4 in the morning; we don't care—we'll come and get you," to no avail. Every year they did a phenomenal job through the DARE program and, I just heard from the member for Toronto–Danforth, through the ERASE program, at the local high schools to try to prevent those deaths. They brought out the mangled remains of cars, they showed videos, and yet somehow it kept going on and on and on.

I spoke earlier about the role of the media and I think, really, we have to call our media to account. There are ads still, as you heard, that are placed every night about new cars. They're just the average family sedan, but the way that they show them handling and driving too fast, driving on the edge of precipices—why is this necessary? Again, with a disclaimer at the bottom of the screen, but why is that necessary? Kids grow up playing Grand Theft Auto. There's a video game that inspires extreme driving. It's about extreme driving and encourages young people to do extreme driving. Some of the manufacturing of our cars—why does a car need to go as fast as some of the models that are out on the roads? Certainly we've come across this with motorbikes. Motorbikes are produced that can go outrageous speeds, speeds that are definitely against the law in all jurisdictions. Again, why?

Young people get their messages from the screen, they get their messages from the ads, they get their messages from video games. As my friend from Toronto–Danforth showed in the anti-smoking campaigns, they're not particularly effective. Why aren't they particularly effective? Because you just watch any Hollywood movie and you'll see the young and the hip, the cool and the chic, lighting up. As soon as you see that, it negates everything else governments do that's positive in terms of trying to reach a certain age level. It's incumbent upon the media, it's incumbent upon advertisers to do something. It would have been nice to see something like that.

The other problem, of course, as we've talked about, is enforcement. I said that it's not really the punishment that's the deterrent for young people, in particular, to engage in criminal activity; it's actually getting caught. So if you don't have a system set up that will catch the perpetrator of the crime, those engaged in anti-social behaviour, then really you're saying, "Go for it." We don't have a system like that and, despite all the best wishes and the best work that's gone into this bill, we still don't have a system like that.

The member for Oak Ridges talked about those victims of the justice system. We do have victims of the justice system. We have victims for lack of the justice system, if you will. I went on a drive-around with a wonderful commander at 14 division, Ruth White, and it was one of the most terrifying experiences of my life, because you sit there in the police car, you look at the computer flashing, and it's flashing red—these are crimes in progress—and you see about 10 of them light

up at once. I said to the sergeant I was driving around with, "Well, where are we going first?" He said, "We only have 20 cars on the road for 100,000 people. We'll maybe make two of these." These are crimes in progress.

Now we're asking our overworked, understaffed police forces to enforce yet other legislation, which they don't have the person power to do. They don't have the person power right now to just keep up with what they've already been charged to execute. We need more community policing; there's no doubt about it. We need more money into our police forces. So there is that.

Then, of course, is the prevention aspect which you heard my colleague from Toronto–Danforth speak about so eloquently. As I said, there is no Ontario drug strategy. We should all be personally ashamed of that. Addiction is a growing problem in all of our communities, whether urban or rural, and we have no systematic way of dealing with that.

I know that in my riding of Parkdale–High Park we are quite well serviced in the area of addiction research, and we're trying to get better at it. We have a round table, as I said, that's hoping to develop a template for the province. We have St. Joe's and CAMH and other providers sitting around a table, trying to figure out what we can do and where we can go from here, including 11 division and 14 division at that table, but we don't have one in the province. We don't have any structured way of dealing with addiction and preventing addiction. That's an incredible piece that's missing from this strategy. You can make all the laws you want and pass all the

legislation you want, but if you don't prevent that behaviour, you're chasing after the fact always.

I talked about the Criminal Code and the work the federal government has done. There are two bills, Bill C-32—which is what Mothers Against Drunk Driving is asking in their Mothers' Day release to have passed and clearly feel it's a much stronger piece of legislation than the provincial. My fear is that what will happen in plea bargaining—we all know that this takes place—is that people will be plea-bargained away from the criminal repercussions of their action down to the provincial act, which in effect actually makes the Criminal Code a little less meaningful.

Hopefully, this is not just a "me too" bill, but hopefully one will look to the federal legislation as well and see how both will work together. We'll only know that in the way this bill is enacted.

My hope is that it is enacted. My hope would have been that it be stronger, that more teeth be given to this bill. You heard the member from Toronto–Danforth talk about the other concerns of Mothers Against Drunk Driving in terms of what could have been, what should have been, what would have been had that happened.

It's a delight to speak finally on something that we all agree on at least as a first step, but I rest with saying it is only a first step.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 6 of the clock, this House is adjourned until 6:45 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 1758.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*



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Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
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St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael</b> (L) Attorney General / procureur général		

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Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.



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Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

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**Lundi 14 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 14 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 14 mai 2007

*The House met at 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 103, An Act to establish an Independent Police Review Director and create a new public complaints process by amending the Police Services Act, when Bill 103 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That there shall be no deferral of any vote allowed pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 10 minutes.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: With respect to the matter of quorum, I note that the government is only just barely maintaining quorum and simply wanted to let them know that if I were to leave and one or two others were to leave, they'd be at risk of losing the evening for failure to keep quorum. I'm just trying to be helpful.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** It may be helpful but it is not a point of order, as quorum, I believe, is present.

Mr. Bradley has moved Bill 103—I was going to try to ad lib it, but since it's right here in front of me: Mr. Bradley has moved that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 103, An Act to establish an Independent Police Review Director and create a new public complaints process by amending the Police Services Act, when Bill 103 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That there shall be no deferral of any vote allowed pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 10 minutes.

Debate?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I appreciate the House leader of the third party's assisting us to know that quorum is something that must be maintained. Of course, we agree with that entirely. I wanted to say, first of all, that this is a strange position. I never thought I'd be in this position, and that is for this reason: Here we have a bill that I know all three parties agree with and are voting in favour of. We have had first reading, significant debate in second reading, committee, we've had two full days of third reading, and we are unable to come to an agreement to finish this bill. I've been compelled, as a result, to assist the House in scheduling the bill. It is strange indeed. But I suspect that at this time of year—we get into the spring and the weather is nice and there's an event coming up in the fall that might influence somehow whether you can get legislation through the House. So I try to be helpful to the opposition from time to time by trying to set some dates for votes so we can have all members here at that time for the vote. When we set it right in the motion, it allows everybody to know where everyone should be at a particular point in time to vote on a bill.

So I'm actually doing a favour to the opposition by bringing in a time allocation motion on this legislation. I'm not one who's a fan of time allocation motions, but I knew—and they warned me, “they” being this nebulous “they” out there. John Diefenbaker always used to talk about “they.” Even my friend Norm Sterling, the member for Nepean—Carleton or Carleton-something—he has always had “Carleton” there—a good friend of mine, when he was House leader, warned me about that. He would say in exasperation in a House leaders' meeting, “Listen, all three parties agree to this, we've had all this debate and nobody wants to tell me when the debate is actually going to conclude.” He used to help out by bringing in a motion which would make things more certain as to the length and the width of the debate and so on.

1850

One thing I can say about our time allocation motions that come earlier in this stage is that we have always provided for committee time. I look to my staff who are all-wise, and they tell me that we have always allowed committee time. As a result, we can plan our committees. We've allowed at least three second reading debate days. We often get into third reading and debate. When I was first elected here, I can remember that there was no third reading debate. Essentially, it went through on a nod. I don't expect that's going to be this all the time. When the



former member for Sudbury East was here, he used to understand that third reading was almost a nod. I know that he would convey to the member for Nickel Belt the traditions we had in those days, when third reading was somewhat of a formality, particularly when everyone agreed with the bill.

I want to note what some people have had to say about it—just some of the endorsements to show that this bill has a good consensus. The mayor of the city of Toronto, David Miller, says, “I believe Torontonians have great faith in their police services, but this should ensure that their faith grows stronger. Where there are problems, people will have a real right to deal with them and have them addressed.” That was “Civilian Agency to Probe Police Conduct” and was quoted from the *Toronto Star*, April 20, 2006.

The *Globe and Mail* noted that the legislation “sends a strong message that police complaints will be taken seriously.” That was April 20, 2006.

Patrick LeSage, former chief justice, said he was “pleased the government was implementing an independent complaints system, as recommended in his report.”

“Policing is an awfully tough job; nevertheless, it is part of the governmental process which should be subject to civilian oversight,” said the *Toronto Star* in the story “Civilian Agency to Probe Police Conduct.”

The leader of the official opposition had this to say. John Tory, Leader of the Opposition, said that it’s “appropriate” that citizens have the right to make complaints to a civilian body. “Civilian Agency to Probe Police Conduct” is the name of that story.

In another editorial from the *Toronto Star*: “By putting the process back into civilian hands, Attorney General Michael Bryant is helping to bring justice to those victimized by rogue officers. But he is also assisting Ontario’s police forces by making it easier for people to come forward to identify ‘bad apples’ in the department.”

As my friend from Orillia has said on many occasions, overwhelmingly in this province the experience is that we have excellent members of our police services, who conduct themselves in the most appropriate fashion, who do serve and protect people. They themselves are perturbed when they find the very rare individual who does not comply with that standard of conduct. Certainly, as I say, whenever I’ve spoken to police officers, they’ve said that if there were someone who was truly in violation of the laws of the province or abusing the job, they would not be pleased with that at all because it reflects on all members of a police service. I’m delighted that overwhelmingly our police officers in this province conduct themselves appropriately and would not be subjected to anything untoward with this particular initiative.

André Marin, the very busy Ontario Ombudsman, had the following to say: “I would like to say at the outset that the government of Ontario deserves credit for introducing Bill 103, which reforms the public complaints process and establishes the Office of the Independent Police Review Director, a new police oversight agency

with wide-ranging powers to oversee and investigate police complaints.”

There are others here. Let’s look at the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. They say, “‘Both citizens and police require a police complaints system that they can have confidence in,’ said Chief Terry McLaren, president of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. ‘We believe this legislation will help strike the right balance between the needs of the public and the police in terms of dealing with complaints.’”

The Police Association of Ontario says the following: “As an organization committed to excellence in policing, we believe that Bill 103 strikes the right balance between protecting the rights of police officers and maintaining public confidence in the civilian oversight system.” Bob Baltin, president of the Police Association of Ontario, said that.

Community Education and Access to Police Complaints Demonstration Project: There were people who talked about Bill 103 and what it would do.

So what we have is something fairly unusual, and that’s a pretty good consensus from all of those who would be affected by the legislation. Does it go as far as some would like? Probably not. Does it go too far for the likes of others? Perhaps. But it strikes a very good balance.

We’ve had good speeches, I think from members of all three political parties in this House, who have talked about the intricacies of the bill, the provisions of the bill, have made their case known, were good in committee at asking the appropriate questions, and if it had to be dealt with in clause-by-clause, had to ask the right questions to make the right points.

Now that we have had two full days of third reading, the bill having completed approval in principle, and committee and first reading and a lot of discussion taking place in and outside this House, the member for Orillia is, I know, dying to see some finality to this. He’ll have an opportunity this evening to utilize his time, though he may wish to speak to the motion. I suspect he’s going to talk about the bill as well and give us some of his very excellent insights. He’s a very perceptive individual and has insights into the provisions of this bill, I think, in his heart of hearts, because I know him well. I’ve been to his riding. It’s a beautiful riding, I must say, one of the nicest parts of North America that you will find. I think you will find that, in his heart of hearts, he believes it’s time for this debate to come to a conclusion and for a vote to take place, and I know he will be enthusiastically voting for it.

I suspect that my friends in the New Democratic Party likewise will be very pleased by that. There may even be some members of the House who are aware that the puck drops at 7 o’clock in Ottawa, and they may well from time to time slip out for only half a minute to get a report on the game.

That’s my presentation this evening. I think it will be a friendly debate tonight. I want to thank the opposition for the role they have played in helping to pass this bill and



to improve the bill in the manner that they feel is appropriate.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate? The member for Simcoe North.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** Thank you so much. Apparently I have 48 minutes ahead of me. I'm here to speak on Bill 103, An Act to establish an Independent Police Review Director and create a new public complaints process by amending the Police Services Act.

First I think I should mention two things. One is to the government House leader, a good friend of mine, who keeps referring to me as the member from Orillia, but I am the member from Simcoe North. I'm very proud of that beautiful riding, and Orillia is of course the only city I have in Simcoe North, but I have six townships, two towns and two First Nations as well—all beautiful.

I know tonight we're speaking on a time allocation motion, and I believe that the House leader for the Liberals had it right when he said that, overall, we all support this legislation. I will say up front that we made a number of amendments to the bill that the government didn't consider, and those were amendments that were put forth by the Police Association of Ontario. But overall, I don't think anybody is against a police review director, or whatever it may be, as long as we look after our police officers and we put some kind of a fair process in place.

**1900**

I will say up front that this really wasn't a burning issue. As the critic for community safety and correctional services, I can tell you that there were very few comments that came in prior to the introduction of this bill that would have indicated that the police complaints system we actually had in place was any kind of a problem. But there was enough, I guess, concern that the government wanted to bring some kind of a bill in, and so we have Bill 103 and here we are tonight talking about it.

Again, we're talking about a time allocation bill. I know the government House leader certainly didn't want to bring in a time allocation bill, because I think if we went back about four years ago right now and you looked in Hansard, I think you'd see a completely different set of comments referring to time allocation. I'm not gullible enough to think that for one second the government wants out of this House.

**Interjection:** Fall fairs.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Yes. There's something important coming up in the fall, besides the fall fairs, something probably—to most people in the province, the fall fairs are probably more important than the election. But the reality is, we do have an election this fall, and I don't think the government for one second wants to be here much longer than maybe a week or two after constituency week, which, I believe, the last time I heard, was next week. We'll all be back in our ridings next week, working hard and serving our constituents.

I guess the question is, why time allocation? Because I know that a time allocation motion really directs the government to vote at a certain time and to get everything all cleaned up. In a lot of cases, a lot of our members did want to speak. They're not here tonight because they're up in Ottawa. As you know, we have a number of—and there's not only the hockey game but, as the Minister of Health Promotion mentioned today, we've got quite a few members in the Ottawa area tonight. Our party is having a fundraiser in Ottawa tonight. I noticed there were a lot of Ottawa questions today in the House. That seems to be odd, that you would be asking Ottawa questions on a day when our leader was in Ottawa. But the reality is that that's the game that's played. Everyone is out raising money these days and trying to do the best they can. I know that our leader is up with a number of our members.

We do have members here, by the way. I'm here tonight speaking for a while, but I can tell you that our other members will be in in a few minutes and will be voting on the time allocation motion, I believe, at 9:20.

But I guess a couple of things I wanted to say were, why would the government want out of the House? Why the time allocation? I think there's a list of things we can go on—I think, first of all, there are a lot of my constituents who are certainly asking questions around Lotto-gate, the OLG. The government members will certainly say that that's a done deal and there are no problems there, but there are still the questions that were asked in the House and the refusal of the minister to respond to those.

Then we go into the whole issue that we've heard recently over the last two or three weeks, that, of course, being the slush fund issue or the slush fund scandal. We can call it Adscam 2—whatever it may be. But there's no question that we've raised taxes—in this particular term of government, we've raised taxes about \$23 billion a year. If there is excess money left over at the end of the year, that money should not be left in any kind of a fund that would indicate that there was any kind of political partisanship involved with that particular fund. I know that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has gone through a number of questions over the last two or three weeks, and now I understand that the Premier has indicated that it will go to the Auditor General for a report, a report that I understand is coming back in July. But I think what we have to be concerned about is the fact that when we have something like the slush fund or Adscam 2, whatever it may be, people who have a hard time paying their taxes, citizens who are not high wage earners and do everything they can to raise their families, pay their mortgages and pay for an automobile—I think that the one thing those folks are asking us to do is to spend their money in a very careful and transparent manner. When we have something like what we've witnessed over the last few days, where obviously funds have been directed towards areas that may show partisanship, that simply is not right. It's not what the citizens who pay for our salaries—they expect more from



their government. For that reason alone, the government would want to be out of this House, because that, of course, has been a very hot issue.

One of the things around Adscam is that it's growing. I can tell you that back in the riding, when you're out at events on the weekends now—particularly on the weekends—people are asking you: "What's this slush fund all about? How do we tap into it?" I had a letter just a week ago from the United Senior Citizens of Ontario—I brought a letter forward that they had sent to me. They were concerned because they represent over 300,000 citizens who are seniors that belong to the United Senior Citizens of Ontario. They obviously wanted to know what was happening with their money and if, in fact, there was any opportunity for them to tap into those funds, any kind of a program that they might have tapped into to receive funds. Groups like the United Senior Citizens of Ontario, under the leadership of president Marie Smith, are representing seniors on issues particularly around abuse. I've talked to Mrs. Smith on a few occasions. She travels around the province talking to seniors' organizations on the topic of elder abuse, which is something that's very important to the seniors in the province of Ontario.

There's another reason, I think, that the government would want out of the House and why they would be bringing time allocation motions forward, and that, of course, is that they have to review their broken promises. We've seen about 60 broken promises from this government that we're aware of, including the whole issue around the coal-fired plants. This is 2007; this is the year when we were supposed to eliminate all coal-fired generation. As you know, the only plant that has been closed has been the Lakeview generating plant. When Elizabeth Witmer, the member from Waterloo, was the Minister of Energy, it's the plant that she decided to close. She put the wheels in motion to close that plant. Of course, now we really haven't gone a long way beyond that, other than to say that the government is saying today that they are going to continue down that path. The coal-fired plants will all close. If you go back to the last election, at that time Premier Eves campaigned on the fact that we would be able to close those plants by 2015. That probably always was the more realistic date for the coal-fired plant closures. Today, we've had broken promise after broken promise around the closure of those plants.

Another reason for time allocation—and those figures came out today—is the whole issue around the loss of manufacturing jobs in the province of Ontario. I got a call from the media just prior to coming here tonight. The riding of Simcoe North, particularly in the Midland-Penetanguishene area, is heavily reliant on manufacturers that produce car parts for the automotive industry. We're scared right now. We've seen these thousands of jobs being lost—13,000 jobs alone in the month of April, manufacturing jobs, a lot to do with the automotive sector. It has to be kind of embarrassing for the Minister of Economic Development to face this, when she comes from Windsor, to find out that these kinds of jobs are

leaving our province. They're closing plants. If you're the minister in that particular area, it has to be a huge issue.

#### 1910

I can tell you that many people across our province are concerned about what is happening to the province of Ontario, why we're not seeing those kinds of incentives that we might have seen go to, for example, people who are involved with the slush fund or the Adscam—why some of that money couldn't have been directed towards the automotive sector or the manufacturers of the province of Ontario so that we can maintain those jobs that are being lost. When you start losing 13,000 jobs in one month, that's on the scale of a downturn in the economy bad enough that we could almost call it a mini-recession, or even a full-fledged recession, for that matter. When we start losing those kinds of jobs, that has a major impact on the revenues that flow to the Minister of Finance and to the government so they can actually go out and operate this province. You've got to remember that now we need \$91 billion a year to operate Ontario because the government has increased taxes by about \$23 billion since they came into power.

I want to talk a little bit about the whole area of police complaints and around policing in general in the province of Ontario. You know, Bill 103 is, as I mentioned a little earlier, a bill that creates a new public complaints process by amending the Police Services Act. But I can tell you, as we go through this legislation—I said earlier that I thought we would have seen more people come forward with actual complaints, complaints about the police. We have roughly 30,000 police officers in the province—sorry, people belonging to the Police Association of Ontario. Many of those are civilians. But I'm guessing that about 25,000 or 26,000 police officers actually work in the province of Ontario. Today in the House, when Minister Kwinter, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, was here, he indicated that this was Police Week. Many of us will be making deputations or will be taking part in functions involving Police Week. I would have thought that on legislation like this, as the critic for community safety and correctional services, I would have had a lot more complaints coming from the general public about policing. The reality is, I've had virtually no complaints about our police in this province. There may be bad apples out there; who knows? There may well be. But generally speaking, the public has not come forward with those complaints. They've certainly not come to our office. As MPPs, we get many areas that the public complains about, usually around bureaucratic issues with different levels of government or different ministries. But certainly I can tell you, and I would be completely upfront about this, I've had virtually no concerns around policing complaints in Ontario.

I'd like to talk about a few different topics here, one being the Police Association of Ontario under the leadership of executive director Bruce Miller and Robert Baltin, who is the president of the PAO. I've worked extremely closely with these gentlemen, not only since I've



been in opposition but since I've been in government as well. I can tell you that we've been very pleased with our relationship with the PAO. Obviously, on bills like Bill 103 or the bill on the grow-ops or any of the pieces of legislation, you want to get their opinions, you want to bounce that off their members, and you want to be able to take it back to your caucus to get their concerns as well. When you talk about the Police Association of Ontario, I think you're talking about a first-class organization that has done good work and represented all police services in the province in a very professional manner. I think they've done a wonderful job of lobbying the government, no matter who's in power, on all the different issues that face our police officers on a day-to-day basis.

The minister mentioned earlier about the police memorial, and he mentioned about the three officers who were inducted this year, or whose names were placed on the wall of honour, as well as three officers who died in the line of duty many decades ago. I know that in all of those cases, the Police Association of Ontario did research and helped with the memorial wall and worked with the government and with the opposition to make sure that that particular ceremony was a ceremony of remembrance and that people were treated in a very professional and courteous manner.

I also wanted to talk a little today about the 1,000 officers program. As you know, the previous government under Premier Harris and Premier Eves added another 1,000 police officers to the streets of our province, and both the Liberal Party and the Progressive Conservative Party campaigned on another 1,000 police officers in the 2003-07 term, the 38th Parliament of the province of Ontario. Today, when I was doing my response to Police Week and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services' remarks, I know I indicated about our part as the official opposition in trying to in a way support the government, but in another way push the government to add those 1,000 police officers to the streets of our province. I take a lot of satisfaction, as critic for community safety, working with my good friend Mr. Runciman, the member from Leeds-Grenville and our critic in justice, and our leader, John Tory, as the leader of the official opposition, in moving forward those 1,000 police officers. For the first 18 months or so of this government's mandate, we didn't really hear a lot about the 1,000 police officers, and we would go on talk shows and put out press releases and try to push the government in any way we could so that they would move forward quickly with that.

I think what was a sad day was the day when the government had failed to react to John Tory's Time for Action report, which was a report on guns-and-gangs violence. In that report, Mr. Tory indicated that his number one recommendation would be to have all the 1,000 police officers on the streets of Ontario by the end of 2006. As you'll recall, that was put out on December 11, 2005, and a terrible tragedy took place down on Yonge Street on Boxing Day. I don't think a lot of people will ever forget that. That was the death of that beautiful

young lady, Jane Creba, who was brutally shot down on Boxing Day in 2005. Very, very shortly after that, the government did react to that and promised that they would put most of the police officers on the streets by the end of 2006. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I've been to a number of the OPP graduations, and it is heartening to see that those officers are slowly making their way onto the streets of the province, graduates of the Ontario Police College. They are great young people who are wanting to become police officers, and they are slowly working their way into positions across Ontario.

So, as I said, I will give the government credit on one hand for bringing in the program and for proceeding with it. But our party honestly takes a lot of credit, because we believe that we put a lot of pressure on the government through press releases and through editorials and through working with our stakeholders, including the OPPA, the OACP, the PAO and the police services boards. So we take a lot of credit in that. In the end, it's kind of like Bill 103 or like the traffic safety bill, the street racing bill today. It's an opportunity where we may be in opposition or we may be opponents of each other, but in the end the people who win are the citizens of Ontario in the fact that they have got more police officers. So we should have, in the end, a safer and more secure province for our young people to grow up in.

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One area we did not talk a lot about is an area of policing that does not receive a lot of support, and that's our police services boards. We've had the opportunity. My leader spoke last week about the rule of law. He was at the conference up in Owen Sound and the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards—I think our leader, John Tory, made a good impression on the folks in that organization. The reality is that these are the people who are appointed by government but are elected by—that are appointed by municipal councils. Many of them have a huge challenge ahead of them. In the end, a lot of folks who sit on the police services boards are people who are tied to law and order. In my community there are a couple of police services board and they work closely with the councils, but they also voice their concerns and get action accomplished by participating on those boards and working with the general public to make our towns and communities safer for the citizens of Ontario and for their communities in particular.

I want to talk a little bit about the Ontario Provincial Police, the province's largest police force and a police service that has served our province extremely well. I believe that in 2009 the OPP will be 100 years old; that's 100 years old for the Ontario Provincial Police. Currently the OPP is under the leadership of Commissioner Julian Fantino. I have to tell you that I am a fan of Julian Fantino. I believe he has accomplished a lot in his career as a police chief, in many jurisdictions, as an officer, and now as the commissioner of the OPP. He has sort of returned the OPP to a more friendly police officer type of organization.



I was here on police memorial day at Queen's Park. I was curious. I had met Mr. Fantino at the tribute downstairs, on level one, when the Premier and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services presented tribute plaques to the families of officers who had lost their lives in the line of duty. I met Mr. Fantino down there. When we went over to the memorial wall for the celebration after, at 11 o'clock, when we actually placed the names of six officers on the memorial wall, I didn't know where Mr. Fantino had gone, but he was in the parade. I think it was the largest turnout of OPP officers that I've ever seen at a function here on the memorial day. The commissioner marched with his troops, his officers, and many commissioned officers were with him. I think it was a day of honour for the Ontario Provincial Police. Also on that day they had a number of bikes from the Golden Helmets. They had officers from right across the province. On a day-to-day basis I hear officers talk about Commissioner Fantino. It's actually almost unbelievable, the kind of respect they have for him.

As we celebrate Police Week and talk about Bill 103 and the whole fact that we have this police complaints bill before us during Police Week, it's interesting to note that we have people like Chief Fantino, who have so much respect. This is a guy who probably could have retired many years ago, but his love of policing, his love of helping young officers and keeping our community safe is very, very important not only to himself, but to the citizens of Ontario. I applaud him for his efforts.

I've got to tell you, one of the first things the commissioner wanted to bring forward just a few months ago was the return to the black-and-white cruisers. I've got to tell you, I looked at that program and I thought, "What's the real advantage here?" There's no question it costs more to paint the vehicles in the beginning. Second, I understand that the reason they went to the white vehicles in the beginning was the fact that they could trade them in for other services and get a higher value for those cruisers if they were plain white and they just had to remove the decals. But, as I see them on the road, I've got to tell you, I think we in politics—just because someone comes out with an idea, you can't just say, "That's right" or, "That's wrong," because if you listen to those particular views, sometimes it will change your mind. I've talked to a number of police officers, and they've been from a number of areas across the province. They convinced me that the black-and-whites are the way to go. It may be a little more expensive, but with Commissioner Fantino's plan to be far more aggressive with aggressive drivers, I think we need that identification out there. I think what helped today was that the bill we all agreed on this afternoon, the street racing bill, where there were a number of amendments made and we were one big happy family around that particular piece of legislation—the same thing has occurred there, and that's the fact that slowly we're going to bring in blue lights on our police services vehicles over the next few years. I'm told that this is a public safety issue. It will be safer for

the officers, and it will mean the roads and highways will be safer as well.

If you listened to our member Mr. Klees today, he talked about some of the people who have died due to road rage, aggressive drivers or street racing. One life lost is one too many. I think we have to move forward, and we have to put in place what is best for police services and what the police services agree is best for us as citizens of the province.

When you're dealing with police officers, you deal with some amazing people and some amazingly dedicated people over the course of time. One of the areas that I'm always pleased to be participating in is, each year, because I think the OPP general headquarters is in my riding, I'm invited to a huge dinner; it's the commissioner's mess dinner. Each year it's held at Base Borden. In fact, it would be in the member for Simcoe—Grey's riding. I get invited each year. It's a black-tie affair, and it's an event I appreciate being invited to because I see the kind of loyalty, the kind of dedication and the kind of commitment that police officers provide to the province of Ontario. For example, each year the person who is the honorary guest who hands out the plaques and the scrolls to all of the new commissioned officers is none other than Lincoln Alexander, former Lieutenant Governor, former MP, just a great, great citizen of our province. Although Lincoln Alexander is getting older, each year he plays an important role—

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** He lives in my riding. He's a constituent of mine.

**1930**

**Mr. Dunlop:** Yes. Do you know what? If there's anybody in this province who has the respect of everybody in the province, it would be the Honourable Lincoln Alexander. He comes to these OPP dinners, and he always has some humour to add. He's a wonderful speaker, and he captures the heart of everybody there. Right off the bat, when you have these dinners and Lincoln Alexander is the guest of honour, and he's handing out these scrolls to the commissioned officers, it's already a winner.

Usually I sit with the honorary commissioner, General Richard Rohmer. Richard Rohmer, of course, is a hero in our country. He's very oriented and very supportive of community safety, law and order and everything that's right about Canada. I usually sit at that mess dinner with him. I want to pay tribute tonight; when I am talking about this particular bill, I want to say what a great job he has done.

I know Richard Rohmer was one of the honorary guests at the tribute downstairs on the first Sunday in May. He accompanied the Premier and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. He was actually one of the key organizers of that event and the police memorial wall, as well as the veterans' wall outside. As we look at the age of some of these guys, they're well past their 80th year, yet they're still dedicated to law and order, they're still dedicated to policing in our province, and they're still dedicated to the citizens



of the province of Ontario and making Ontario a better place to live.

What I was getting to was, when I work my way through these comments, I'm wondering where all these police complaints are. I'm not getting them. I take my job as critic very, very seriously, and very few people come forward. But again, I want to go back to that mess dinner for a second and talk about some of the commissioners we see, like Thomas O'Grady and Gwen Boniface, former commissioners, and Mr. Eric Silk. These are all people long before my time, but I can tell you that these folks are all out there. They're still as proud as ever today that they were commissioners or they were commissioned officers. When you go to these dinners and you see the number of retired commissioned officers with a group like the OPP—and they bring in other police services as well to their events—you understand just what an honourable position the whole organization is and why a complaint can almost be dealt with internally, because I don't think people like Julian Fantino, Gwen Boniface or Tom O'Grady accept for one second anything but perfection from their top officers. That has a way of working its way down through the whole system, and that's why, as the OPP approaches 100 years in service to the province of Ontario, it's so important that we understand why people who have served in these positions have done so in a professional, honourable way, committed to the province of Ontario: because it's their own name that's on the line.

I go back to even today. I mentioned very briefly in my comments with respect to the announcement of Police Week by the minister this afternoon that in our own ridings I would really encourage people—I don't know how many people are taking in policing events this coming week over the next few days, but if you haven't been supportive of policing or if you haven't been involved in a lot of events, one thing you'll find for sure is that you will be welcomed to be part of that. Again, I go back to the fact that I'm very, very honoured to be the MPP for a riding that is the home of the OPP general headquarters. I can tell you, over the next couple of weeks, it's absolutely incredible how many policing events are taking place.

I mentioned earlier today in the House that we have an officer who works on community projects in Orillia; his name is Gerry Dwyer. I have to tell you, he's a friend of mine. I didn't know Gerry before he got his job and before I got my job. But I can tell you that with these types of people like Constable Gerry, the dedication they have to the community is absolutely incredible. They are always looking out for the young people, the old people, and everyone in between. Whether it's elder abuse seminars, whether it's projects with the DARE program, whether it's the RIDE program, you'll see these people day in and day out working on behalf of their constituents.

As I mentioned earlier today, and it's kind of a joke—not a joke, but kind of humorous—around Orillia right now, Constable Gerry has arranged to have the Stanley

Cup come to Orillia this Saturday. It's going to be at the detachment at, I believe, 10 o'clock in the morning. He has called and asked me if I would bring my kids and my grandchildren out to view the Stanley Cup. I'll do my very, very best. Then he's moving the Stanley Cup up to the Orillia Square Mall, where people will be able to view the cup. As I mentioned earlier today, the humour around this is that Gerry is taking credit for bringing the Stanley Cup to Orillia, and he teases about the fact that Toronto has been trying to win the Stanley Cup for the last 40 years and they haven't been very successful, but Constable Gerry has been able to bring the Stanley Cup home on his first try to bring it there.

I shouldn't talk about the Stanley Cup, because I know we're talking about an Ottawa game tonight. I gotta tell you, I'm an Ottawa fan, I'm a Toronto fan, I'm a Montreal fan—I'm a Canadian fan, eh? So I cheer for the Canadian teams. They're great clubs. I love them all and I'm so proud to be a Canadian around hockey. I just wish we had the Quebec Nordiques and the Winnipeg Jets back. That was just a disaster when we lost those clubs in Canada.

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** And the Phoenix Coyotes are doing how well?

**Mr. Dunlop:** The Phoenix Coyotes will never be the Winnipeg Jets and the Colorado Rockies will never be the Quebec Nordiques, in my opinion, but it's so interesting to watch this and to listen to the comments of folks.

But I've got to tell you, I had an opportunity a couple of years ago—I have to mention this and put it on the record. I was golfing in a tournament with the administrator of the Mnjikaning First Nation, a gentleman by the name of Dan Shilling. We were golfing on this one particular hole and we came around on our golf carts, and there, on the 13th hole on Hawk Ridge Golf and Country Club, was the Stanley Cup all set up. It was amazing to watch all these men, basically a bunch of guys, and everybody wanted their picture taken with the Stanley Cup, eh? It was unbelievable because, you know, you become a little kid again. All you can think of is the days of Dickie Duff and Ralph Backstrom and Jean Beliveau—all the guys we grew up with who were our heroes.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** That's way before our time.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Yeah. Here was the Stanley Cup out there, the cup that Jean Beliveau and Guy LaFleur had hoisted over their heads. It was there on the Hawk Ridge golf course. I can understand why they tour that Stanley Cup over to Afghanistan, why they tour it around the world, because as Canadians, there are very, very few things more important than the Stanley Cup.

The members have just indicated that the score is still 0-0 at the end of the first period, Ottawa and Buffalo.

Mr. Speaker, I know I got off base a little bit with the Stanley Cup story. What I'm trying to say—I'm trying to compliment the police services in our province. As I said earlier, as critic for community safety, I have had virtually no complaints about policing. I think overall they



do an absolutely phenomenal job representing our communities right across our country. Whether it's in the far north or the southern part of our province or whatever, I think they do an unbelievable job and I, for one, appreciate it.

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It's not like every country in the world. There are many countries in the world where policing is corrupt and I understand why we need this legislation. I understand that we have to make sure that there is a safety net in place for the general public. I just hope we don't build this into something where it becomes a huge bureaucracy, the police complaints division of our province. At one point in the LeSage report they talked about regional centres or regional offices set up to look after police complaints, and I can't agree with that. I think that if you have a responsible police services board, a responsible chief of police, the system has a way of maintaining itself in a very professional manner that commits itself to community safety and to good policing right across our province.

I've only got a few minutes left and I wanted to talk a little bit about some of the smaller police services. I talked earlier about the OPP and having the general headquarters in my riding but I wanted to mention that I have just a couple of smaller police services as well, one being the Mnjikaning Police Services at Rama. They do all the public safety and policing at the casino, along with the OPP, who have officers in the casino itself at Casino Rama. I want to mention something about the Beausoleil First Nation Police Service, which I get to see each and every year on Aboriginal Day, which is June 21.

I would hope that everyone, even if you don't have a First Nations in your riding, if you have an opportunity to get out and take part in a powwow, take part in some of the Aboriginal Day festivities, it's well worth it. It will be something that I think would be very special to you. The problem I've got is, because I have one that's out on an island. Christian Island—that's Beausoleil First Nation—it's about a four-hour round trip to get out there, take part in the festivities and get back. Then I have to go to the Metis First Nation, which is the Georgian Bay Metis Council, and then over to the Mnjikaning First Nation. It's difficult to get all the Aboriginal Day events in in a day.

But one of the things that I think is clear is that all the governments have done a fairly respectable job of bringing First Nation policing to the forefront. In a lot of cases I thank the OPP because they've shown the leadership in that particular area and have drawn First Nation policing to the top of the line. Whenever I go to graduation ceremonies now, whether in the auxiliary program or whether it's in the recruitment program for the OPP, I generally always find that there's a number of First Nation police officers who are graduating. I want to say, very briefly, I was able to go to the last recruitment. It was about three weeks ago up in Orillia at Otis Park. The OPP graduated around 100 officers into the Ontario Provincial Police, and I believe there were three First Nation police service

officers recruited and graduated that day as well, who went back to their First Nations to act as officers in those particular areas. That's something that's nice to see, and it's important that we recognize the importance of those, particularly at a time when we have Caledonia on our plate.

The whole situation around Caledonia has been very difficult for police services, and it's been very difficult for the OPP because they're there to keep peace, they're there to keep law and order. They're trying their very best to do what is right. However, if you talk to officers at Caledonia, they'll tell you, and I've said a number of times in this House, they feel like the meat in a sandwich. The pressure is on them from every angle and they really haven't seen the leadership from upper levels of government. As a result, the whole issue around Caledonia has been very expensive to the OPP budget. Although we haven't lost any lives, it has cost the taxpayers in the province of Ontario—I'm guessing now, but it has to be very close to \$100 million in taxpayer cost to run the OPP program there. I know you have to have officers there, but when you have to have 124 officers there day in and day out, seven days a week, it adds up to be a lot of money. The fact is, it takes those resources away from other detachments that the OPP has across the province, and that could be highway patrol or the different specialized programs that the Ontario Provincial Police run.

As we wind down here, I want to say that although the government didn't accept our amendments that the Police Association of Ontario had put forward on Bill 103, I do know that our caucus will still support the legislation. We think there are some improvements that could be made to it, but we may have to make those improvements after we get back in government.

As we speak tonight on this time allocation motion, I wanted to make those comments on the record why we in our caucus support the police services in our province. We think they do a wonderful job day in and day out. We probably have as good policing in Ontario as any jurisdiction anywhere in the world. There are programs that are run by our police services that are second to none. As we move forward as a society and as a province, we have to know that we always have the security of excellent police services right here in our province.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to sit down in seven seconds. Thank you so much for the opportunity to comment on Bill 103. Our suggestion will be that we will be supporting this bill.

**Ms. Horwath:** It is my pleasure to make a few remarks this evening on what we know is before us as a time allocation motion brought forward by the government House leader.

I have to say, for those people who weren't here when he brought the motion forward, it was kind of comical almost. He was kind of abashedly bringing forward the motion, reading it and then spending quite some time talking about, even though he doesn't really support or believe in time allocation motions, why it was he thought that this one was going to be okay and this one he could



support. He spent some time talking about the fact that he was doing the House a favour, doing the Legislature a favour in fact, by bringing forward this particular time allocation motion. In fact, I think he said something like he's assisting the House in scheduling this bill and getting it through, because of course in his opinion everybody supports this bill, so why not just have it go through without any debate, without any real time and attention put to the details? But of course everyone knows that's what opposition is here for: to look at the details, review the fine print and make sure that when the government is bringing issues forward, the rhetoric they couch their issues or their bills in actually matches up with what the fine letter of the law is when it comes to the actual legislation that is before us.

So notwithstanding the favour that the government House leader has done in this particular motion, I have to say it was pretty comical, because even though he protested vociferously about how time allocation motions are not something that he regularly supports, we do in fact have before us a time allocation motion. I think somebody named Shakespeare said something about protesting too much. I was thinking about that when the government House leader was talking about how it is that he really doesn't believe in time allocation motions, but in this particular case a time allocation motion is something that of course everybody should understand why, even though on principle it's not something that is thought well of, in this particular instance it's okay. I have to say that my friend the member for Nickel Belt spent some time over the last little while looking at exactly how much debate and scrutiny Bill 103—the bill that is before us in terms of time allocation—how much time has actually been spent on this particular bill. I know that she'll be speaking to that herself, and so I'm not going to scoop her research on that issue.

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Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that when I first arrived here—in fact, looking at the calendar today, I think it's three years ago yesterday that I was elected in the by-election in Hamilton East, and it was about two weeks after that I actually was sworn in. I recall, because it was about the same time of the year, that at that time there was a different House leader and there was nasty stuff happening, like midnight sittings. I thought I had ruined my life for sure: "What is this midnight sittings stuff? I didn't know that was a part of the deal." Obviously, we now have a much more effective House leader who can get things done by making sure he's doing the House a favour in that he's an operative in terms of bringing forward bills in a timely fashion and not forcing us into midnight sittings. I have to say that I do appreciate the skill of the current House leader in making sure that midnight sittings haven't yet occurred at the end of the session here.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Horwath:** Yes, it's got something to do with our House leader and how co-operative he is on all matters,

I'm sure. He's quite an effective House leader in that regard.

Nonetheless, the bottom line is that one of the first things I did learn when I arrived here was this whole bogeyman, if you want to call it that, of time allocation. In my first debate, I was so uptight because I really didn't know so much about the legislation that was to be debated, but my colleagues were saying, "Don't worry. It's a time allocation motion. You don't even have to speak to the bill. You just speak to shutting down debate and lack of democracy and lack of transparency, and the government's lack of willingness to hear from all sides of the Legislature in terms of trying to improve the bill, and the arrogance of governments that just ram through legislation with time allocation motions. That's kind of all you need to concentrate on." You don't really even need to focus so much on the bill itself, but rather the criticism focuses on the shutting down of democracy or the reduction of scrutiny that occurs when the time allocation motions are brought forward, and that's of course what we're doing tonight.

Having said that, there has been some debate in the House already in second reading and there has been some time in committee on this bill—the government House leader did allude to that as well when he read his motion and spoke to it about an hour and a half ago. But the bottom line is that there are some issues that I think need to be reinforced around some of the criticisms of Bill 103. I have to say that the number of speakers who came to the committee was significant. There were a number of presentations at committee; a number of stakeholders, as we call them, who came to committee to talk about this bill. But from my perspective, when you look at the most significant outstanding issue that remains in regard to this bill, it's the issue around oversight.

Bill 103, which I guess I should explain a little further, since I'm not going to be talking so much about time allocation but more to the bill particularly, is a bill that pretty much establishes a new system of police complaints in the province of Ontario. Police complaints are a pretty sensitive issue, and everybody knows it. They're sensitive to community members. It's a sensitive issue to police themselves. It's a sensitive issue to police administration. It's a sensitive issue for police unions. It's a sensitive issue. It's one that has significant difficulties associated with it from all perspectives: from the perspective, perhaps, of a community person who is trying to make a complaint all the way to the other end, to the situation of the current body or the body that will be replaced now, which I think is called OCCOPS, and is going to be kind of scrapped and replaced by this Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services, which is what Bill 103 puts in place.

Interestingly enough, there were a number of presenters at committee who made some comments. I know the previous speaker, my friend from Simcoe North riding—not Orillia, but Simcoe North riding; Orillia is the city, and he has many towns and townships as well—did speak a little, particularly around the police association



and their concerns with this bill. But one of the people who had some significant criticisms of Bill 103 was the Ombudsman of Ontario.

It's kind of funny, because when the government House leader was introducing his time allocation motion, I recall that some of the government members were heckling: "How about the Ombudsman? The Ombudsman is very busy right now with all kinds of other jobs." Of course the sticking point in Bill 103, the new system for a complaints process for people to make complaints about the police, is the fact that there is no oversight by the Ombudsman. Heckling that the Ombudsman is really busy—people on this side of the House, the opposition, are saying, "The Ombudsman is not busy enough." We have lists and lists of things that we think the Ombudsman should be looking into, the very least of which is one that just came up today in the committee I was in, and that was around Bill 165, which is the independent child advocate and the fact that an independent child advocate for the province of Ontario is extremely important and needs to happen, but that needs to happen in tandem with oversight by the Ombudsman of children's aid societies and child welfare overall, because the advocate can only go so far in regard to systemic reviews and particularly in regard to investigations, but the Ombudsman has the force, the power, the resources, the skills, the history and the basic infrastructure to do really effective reviews of various government services, various agencies, various systems the public of Ontario is receiving services from when it comes to government.

Having said that, Mr. Marin was one of the people who actually made a presentation to the standing committee in their review of Bill 103. When it went to the standing committee, Mr. Marin was there and made some really salient points about Bill 103 and why he felt the bill had a poison pill in it. I think those are the words the Speaker himself has used when he's not the Acting Speaker but is sitting here in the New Democratic Party caucus. I think he has often used that term in reference to omnibus bills. He says, "It's an omnibus bill and we may support many things in it, but it's got a poison pill." In this bill, the poison pill is section 97, if I'm not mistaken. Section 97 specifically says that the Ombudsman does not have the right to investigate or review matters that are subject to complaints with police services. That is extremely problematic.

I'm going to talk in a little more detail about what Mr. Marin had to say specifically about why he thought his role would be important in terms of police oversight. But I've got to tell you that it's not a new theme for New Democrats to raise the issue of Ombudsman oversight in areas of this province that are currently exempt from that sober second look or that unbiased review process. As I said, just this morning I was talking about Bill 165 and the child advocate, which is going to third reading on Thursday—I'm looking forward to that third reading debate. But a piece that's missing from the child advocate, and from children's welfare issues generally in Ontario, is this third-party eye, if you want to call it that,

this unbiased, separate, independent overview that can happen with the Ombudsman.

Members might recall that there are currently three outstanding private member's bills that are waiting for second reading debate. Bill 88 is on independent oversight of children's aid societies by the Ombudsman—it's a bill I personally brought forward a couple of years ago. Around the same time, my colleague the member from Trinity-Spadina brought in a bill calling for independent oversight of schools boards by the Ombudsman's office. Then I also brought a bill in terms of Ombudsman oversight of hospitals and long-term-care facilities

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When you think about things like the education of our children, the welfare of the children of this province, the access that members of our communities and residents of this province have to some of the important services, like health care and long-term care, and imagine that there is no independent, unbiased, separate, totally unconnected place to go if there's a problem or an issue that a consumer of services or a resident might have regarding those systems, there's no place to go, is simply unacceptable. In fact, it is the case that in the province of Ontario we're at the end of the pack when it comes to Ombudsman oversight or any kind of systemic oversight structure for a number of areas. Child welfare is one; health care is another.

It's simply unacceptable, particularly when you think of the fact that the services that are provided in those sectors are so fundamental, so important, so key to the ongoing livelihood and well-being of people in the province of Ontario, and to imagine that there is no way that people can get a review of their concerns, an investigation into their complaints or even get an acknowledgement that there might be something wrong and a little bit of follow-up to either say to them, "No, the issue you're bringing forward is not really what you're thinking it is, and so it's not really a valid complaint," or, which often happens is the other case where the Ombudsman and the work the Ombudsman's office does come quite clearly on the side of the person making the complaint and saying, "Yes. Not only do you have a valid complaint, and so not only do we need to get redress for your particular issue, but the whole system is set up so that you ended up with that problem and many other people are ending up with the same problem. So the system needs to be overhauled" to make it more responsive and more accountable, and make it actually do what it's supposed to in terms of the mandate provided through the province.

One of the examples is the FRO. That has come up so many times, and I've got to tell you that the Ombudsman has done stellar work for my own constituents in Hamilton East around systemic problems with the FRO. They come up over and over again, and the extent to which these problems exist and are not resolved is absolutely frightening. So the Ombudsman has a key role to play when it comes to some of the systems that are extremely well funded, extremely important and funda-



mental in terms of the life and quality of life we expect in the Ontario.

That's why we have government. We have government to provide services to meet different needs of different members of different communities and different constituents and residents of Ontario. Whether it's health care, justice, child welfare, economic justice, whatever, the bottom line is that the systems we have in place, the programs the government provides, are by their nature very important to the various groups who take advantage of them or use them at various points in their lives.

So why wouldn't we have independent oversight of these systems? Why wouldn't we have somebody there whom we as the public can rely on? These are our services. Our government provides them, and we've empowered our government with the obligation to provide those services in an organized, public fashion. So of course there needs to be somebody there to oversee the way these services are provided, to make sure they're provided appropriately and properly, with accountability and an efficacy that makes sense, and that's appropriate and accessible to all the residents of this province.

It's interesting that when the Ombudsman raised the issue about this bill particularly, what he said about Bill 103 was this: "Independent civilian oversight of the police enriches democracy by enhancing accountability." He is basically lauding the government for bringing forward Bill 103. He says it's a good thing; it's a good start. "It also encourages our constabulary to constantly strive for best practices. The new government body, however, is just that: a government body. No matter how independent or arm's length of the rest of the government it may be, it reports back through a boss which is part of the executive branch of government."

Then he talks about the fact that there's a great value in independent officers of the Legislature, which we have, of course. We know the Auditor General, who has just been tasked with the job of looking into the slush fund, the Collegate affairs of the last couple of weeks, whereby the Auditor General has been asked to review the extent to which the Liberal Minister of Citizenship and Immigration was inappropriately handing out dollars, without any proper process, to groups, many of which—not all, but many of which—have not-so-innocent connections, if you will, to the Liberal Party of Ontario. The Auditor General is an independent officer of the Legislature, so it's his job, without bias and without any preconceived allegiances, to investigate that particular issue.

We also have the Ombudsman. Whereas the Auditor General does the value-for-dollar type of analysis, which he's going to be doing with the slush fund, with the Collegate issue, so, then, the Ombudsman also has a role. His role is more of a systemic review about the way the programs operate, the extent to which they're accessible to all of the people of Ontario, the way the programs are meted out in a fair and appropriate way, and the way they're meeting the stated mandate the government had

when those programs were put in place. That's the job the Ombudsman does.

The Ombudsman says that we're very fortunate to have a number of independent officers of the Legislature who undertake that kind of review. Of course, his office is one of those. But he also says, "The office of the Ombudsman won't be there for anyone who might want to complain about the workings of this powerful new government body," the one established in Bill 103. He says that as parliamentarians, this is something that should be disturbing us. He says that we should be asking ourselves what causes the government to create an exception to the rule. That's the poison pill that my friend from Beaches—East York often talks about that's buried in some of these bills. In this one, the poison pill is the fact that the Ombudsman is exempt. "What is the overriding and overarching principle that would support parking the province's main accountability vehicle at the door when we are talking about a new police review body? I can think of no such principle," he says.

He goes on and on in his remarks to talk about why he thinks it's so important that this new complaints body does come under the oversight of the Ombudsman. In fact, he raised this when this bill first came forward and he raised it again when it came to committee earlier in January this year. The principle is, you have a system—this is the justice system, right? This is the police; this is police complaints. He says, basically, who will guard the guards? I know that's an issue that has come up. You have the guards who are guarding the criminals or who are guarding the freedoms and the laws of our land, but there needs to be someone guarding the guards. I know the government members have said from time to time that it's not appropriate, that it's just another level of bureaucracy. It's not a level of bureaucracy, I would submit. It's a level of insurance, if you will; it's a level of higher authority that gives people the real sense of things being done properly and the real sense that, if things aren't done properly, there's someone there who you can turn to for the checks and balances that are necessary to make the system work.

I have a few other things I want to remark on, and then I'm going to cede the floor, because I know my friend the member from Nickel Belt has some remarks to make as well.

The Ombudsman goes on in his remarks to talk about the extent to which government members have said, "Well, you know, police complaints issues have been percolating around since 1990. Ombudsman oversight has never been an issue, so why bring it in now? There's no point." With the history of police complaints in the province of Ontario, they've said, "Do you know what? It doesn't matter; it's not important to have the Ombudsman oversight happening in this particular area."

## 2010

What the Ombudsman very accurately outlines is the history of police complaints generally and how they came from the largest police force in the province of Ontario, which of course is the Toronto police force, and



how it was a municipal complaints process that then kind of morphed into the provincial police process. It was just a kind of oversight of process, because it went from municipal, where there is no ombudsman, to provincial and morphed on to different iterations from there. But the bottom line is, because of a history that didn't have Ombudsman oversight, that's not a good enough excuse to not have Ombudsman oversight when you have the chance, when you're rewriting the whole issue of police complaints.

I'm going to sit very shortly, but I do want to say that from my perspective, it's important that we acknowledge that mistakes happen, that issues occur, that people need a good, positive process to turn to when it comes to police complaints. In fact, police and police administration all would be well served by a solid complaints process, one that everybody feels is appropriate and is meeting all of the needs of the various stakeholders in these very sensitive issues, and I know because I'm going through some really major issues in my own community, in the Hamilton area, policing issues that have really rocked the community. Again, it's not for me to judge whether the police acted appropriately or they did not, whether there are still outstanding issues that need to be resolved or there are not. But I can tell you that with an ironclad, really appropriate police complaints process, we're all players, if you will. Our having a hearing, being heard and being brought into the resolution of these complaints in an equitable way, I think, is extremely important.

Notwithstanding that, I think the cream of the crop or the top of the process, the height of accountability, has to be with Ombudsman oversight at the end of the day, because it takes the resolution out of the system and puts it into a non-biased place where we know that our Ombudsman, particularly in the province of Ontario, has done some great work, whether that's great work with special-needs kids and parents who have had to give up custody of their own children just so that they could get the services that the government was prepared to provide but only if you were getting it through the CAS—you couldn't get it directly. You could no longer get a special-needs agreement with the service providers or with the agencies in your community; you had to get it through the children's aid society. The only way the children's aid society can arrange for your child to have the services that they need is if you actually give up custody of your child to the children's aid society and then they get the service. That's unacceptable, and we know that the Ombudsman did some great work around it. I think the report that he brought forward in regard to special-needs children was called *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*.

We know that the Ombudsman has done a number of great investigations and has brought a number of really important issues to light. It's not a matter of criticizing the government of the day; it's a matter of reviewing the systems of the day to make sure that they work for the

people of Ontario, and no government should be afraid of that.

**Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale):** I think when we're discussing this bill, it's important to keep in mind what the government was trying to do. What the government was trying to do was to get the right balance, and that's the right balance between citizens who may find themselves in conflict with or critical of a police activity, and the police officers themselves, who are charged with the responsibility for safeguarding everyone in our society.

So how do we get the right balance between providing an effective mechanism to put forward a complaint and to investigate the complaint—how do we find the right balance between protecting the rights of the complainant and protecting the rights of the police officers?

It's refreshing to note that we did get the right balance, and as evidence of that, what I want to do is quote from some reaction to the bill, from both the citizens who are in the civil rights community here in Ontario, and the police officers. First of all, I'll start off with a quote from Alan Borovoy. Alan Borovoy is a very distinguished civil libertarian; he heads the Canadian Civil Liberties Association and he said the following: "Bill 103 makes a number of welcome moves ... and to this extent, the Canadian Civil Liberties commends the initiative."

Laurie Letheren, at ARCH, the disability law centre: "ARCH is encouraged by the government's initiative to reform the current police complaints process."

Royland Moriah, of the African Canadian Legal Clinic, says: "In principle, we do support the amendments that are proposed in Bill 103. We are pleased that Bill 103 moves towards a more independent police complaints system by the creation of an independent oversight body to administer the system."

Those are a couple of comments from people who are on the civil rights, civil libertarian side of this equation.

I balance that against a quote from the Police Association of Ontario: "As an organization committed to excellence in policing, we believe that Bill 103 strikes the right balance between protecting the rights of police officers and maintaining public confidence in the civilian oversight system," said Bob Baltin, president of the Police Association of Ontario.

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police: "Both citizens and police require a police complaint system that they can have confidence in," said Chief Terry McLaren, president of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. "We believe this legislation will strike the right balance between the needs of the public and the police in terms of dealing with complaints."

And then balanced against that, I want to offer a few more quotes from those people who are noted for their commitment to civil rights. Roberto Jovel, the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants: "We welcome the bill's general thrust towards an independent mechanism for police review that is grounded on civilian oversight."



And from the Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto, Bryan Eyolfson: "There are many aspects of Bill 103 that propose a significant improvement over the current police complaints system ... the appointment of an independent police review director and the establishment of his or her office, including the creation of regional offices...."

A further quote from those on the civil rights side of the issue, from the Urban Alliance on Race Relations: "We commend the government for appointing Mr. LeSage to study this important issue, and for making his recommendations a reality through Bill 103," said Sri-Guggan Sri-Skanda-Rajah, president of the Urban Alliance on Race Relations. "Proper review and complaint mechanisms are essential to ensure accountability, trust and respect between the police and the public. We believe Bill 103 goes a long way towards providing such mechanisms."

Finally, a quote from the Community Education and Access to Police Complaints Demonstration Project: "Community-based groups and organizations have long advocated for an independent police review system that is firmly grounded in civilian oversight," said Kevin Lee, executive director of the Community Education and Access to Police Complaints Demonstration Project. This project is a partnership of about 40 community organizations based out of the Scadding Court Community Centre here in Toronto. He goes on to say, "While there is always more work to do, we believe that Bill 103, which is built on civilian review, is a major step forward."

## 2020

"For this legislation to be truly accessible to all Ontarians, it is paramount for the community-based sector to collaborate with the office of the IPRD; this collaboration will ensure accessibility, accountability and transparency for all community members." This is the important part of the quote: "To this end, we are pleased that the bill provides for broad-based advisory committees to be set up. We look forward to working with the government to implement a strong, independent, police review system."

There we have the point that I'm trying to make. We seem to have struck the right balance here. I have offered a number of comments from policing agencies. I have offered a number of comments from agencies and organizations that work with and are focused on having members of the public bring forward their complaints, particularly, I might say, those members of the public from a minority background or a disability background or a poverty background. And what do those series of quotes that I've just put into Hansard have in common? They agree that this legislation strikes the right balance in protecting the right of a complainant to fairly bring forward a complaint, have it investigated and dealt with properly, while at the same time ensuring that the police officers and the police agencies who are the subject of the complaint receive fair, balanced treatment. This legislation strikes the right balance.

**Ms. Martel:** The reality is that we're talking about a time allocation motion here this evening. That's what the government has tabled: a time allocation to cut off debate on third reading.

I've got enormous respect for the government House leader. I've been here a long time; he's been here longer than me. Nobody read back to him tonight some of the comments he used to make about time allocation, but I've got to tell you, Mr. Bradley could summon up a lot of outrage at a moment's notice, very quickly, around time allocation when the need arose. I wish I had a few of his comments right now, but let me just tell you, as one who saw the current government House leader in action during the Conservative years, when time allocation was moved he certainly had a lot to say, and not just on time allocation motions that were moved after second reading and dealt with committee stage and clause-by-clause and debate on third reading. Oh, no no no: The current government House leader had a lot to say as well when the government used it on third reading. "Interesting" is I guess the best way to describe the comments made tonight by the current government House leader as he tried to justify why it was okay in his view to move this time allocation motion tonight: because it's only on third reading, isn't it, so it's really not shutting down debate, really not bringing the jackboots to the matter, although he used to use that kind of word quite frequently too in years past. So that kind of justification around why it's okay was interesting. The government House leader can certainly say that he's only trying to do this to manage the House. I would remind everybody that the government, with its majority, runs the House and sets the agenda, so it's a little bit interesting or funny or strange to hear him use that justification as well.

The reality is that we're dealing with a bill on which the debate is going to be shut off. There's going to be a vote on this; there's not going to be much more to say when that party ends. What's interesting is that really people should be asking themselves why that's happening. If Bill 103 was such a priority for this government, why are we, at the 11th hour, when all three parties essentially agree with this bill, dealing with a time allocation motion on third reading that's now being forced down our throats by the government? What we should really be asking is why it took the government so long to get such a priority piece of legislation in this assembly in the first place. If you go back and take a bit of a look at the history of this bill, it really makes you wonder why we're here at the 11th hour and why the government is in such a rush.

Patrick LeSage brought down his report on changes to the complaint process on April 22, 2005, a little over two years ago. He was here in the media studio. It was a press conference that was well attended. My colleague Mr. Kormos, who is our justice critic, was there. He reported back to us that His Honour at that time brought forward a report that was very comprehensive, very thorough, very well prepared, very well done, that set out a blueprint for the government. They couldn't have asked for it to have



been done any better in terms of the work he did to put it all on the plate before them.

That was April 22, 2005. Do you know that it took the government until April 19, 2006, three days short of a full year later, to finally take that work that was done, in place, and turn it into a bill that would finally come before this Legislature? A whole year, less three days. This is a priority? It's hard to imagine under that circumstance. It's hard to imagine that it took so long, because the work was essentially done for the bureaucracy. The recommendations about change, the sections that had to be changed, those things that had to be done, were all laid out in the report by His Honour. Why it took the government a whole year less three days to finally take that wonderful report and actually craft a piece of legislation is beyond me. What took so long and what was the problem? It couldn't have been much of a priority if it took that long to actually move from the report to the legislative wording and to bring the bill in.

But it didn't stop there. The bill was introduced on April 19, 2006, for first reading. When is it finally called for some debate? Bear in mind this is supposed to be a big priority for the government, right? Well, guess what? The bill wasn't called for second reading until October 16, 2006. So last year after the bill is introduced, the whole spring session goes by and the Attorney General can't even get this bill forward for second reading. We lose a whole number of other months—at least six—before the bill finally sees the light of day again in this place. It sees the light of day again on October 16, 2006, when we have debate on second reading on October 16, on October 18 and October 23. Now we're at least 18 months from the time that the recommendations for change were first made by His Honour here at Queen's Park. So the bill goes to committee for some public hearings on the 30th and the 31st. Clause-by-clause I think occurred on February 1. Finally it's reported back to the House when the Legislature resumes on March 19. But it's not called for debate right away. It's reported back, but it's not called for third reading debate until April 3. Then a whole other month goes by—five weeks, actually—before the government decides that this bill is worthy of some further debate. So another day of debate on third reading is finally scheduled for May 10 and then May 14.

That is the history of this bill in terms of its timing, a bill that was oh so important to the government to get forward, to get moving on, to get before this Legislature: a full year before the legislation is even developed from the report that the government requested His Honour provide to them—a full year—and then a full other six months before we even get from that first reading introduction stage to actually have some debate, not until October 2006. And then, when it does get reported back finally, in 2007, after it has gone through some very limited committee processes and limited clause-by-clause, we see it again very briefly on April 3 and then not again until May 10.

Frankly, this is not a bill that the government has been all over and on top of and anxious to move forward. It's certainly hard to put this bill in the category of a priority, because just by the legislative calendar alone and how it has moved forward in the process, it hasn't been a priority. So it's strange to be here tonight dealing with a sudden rush on the part of the government to get this done when, really, for two solid years there hasn't been much of any kind of rush at all to work on the very important recommendations that were put forward by His Honour to ensure that we would have a new proper complaints procedure system in the province.

**2030**

Not much is left, because of course the debate will end and there will be a vote and that will be the end of that. But it is a bit strange, passing strange, that there seems to be so much urgency this evening that would necessitate the government moving a time allocation on third reading for a bill that hasn't been a priority at all, regrettably.

Let me deal a little with the section around the Ombudsman, because the bill is very clear. This is of course a flaw that concerns us a great deal in the New Democratic Party. The bill is very clear that under section 97, the Ombudsman Act does not apply to anything done under this part. It's not even as if there's an omission and that there might have been some possibility that maybe there was just a lack of thinking around having oversight. It's very clear that the drafters thought about that and decided there would be a prohibitive clause inserted into the legislation to make absolutely sure that the Ombudsman wasn't going to have any oversight. This begs the question, why is this government so afraid of André Marin? What is it about this Ombudsman that the government is so concerned about that they would, in the legislation before us tonight, Bill 103, specifically prohibit oversight by his office with respect to this new complaints procedure?

I heard members earlier say, "He's busy enough." No, he isn't busy enough. Let me tell you, we'd be very happy to see him investigating a number of things, because in his very short time as Ombudsman, he has certainly looked under all the cracks, wiped the cobwebs away, shuffled and shaken up the place in a manner that we haven't seen in quite some while. Despite the very good work that was done by other Ombudsmen, I think Mr. Marin has been right on it right from the get-go, anxious to investigate complaints that have been brought before him, anxious to make recommendations, anxious to make change.

Maybe that's what the government is afraid of. Maybe that's what worries the government. When he does make reports, nine times out of 10 those reports made on issues he has investigated are not so very complimentary to the government or the government's actions. In fact, in terms of Mr. Marin's investigations, his track record has been to be very critical of the government, to be very critical of the bureaucracy, to be very critical of stonewalling within the government against people who are looking for, oh, cancer treatment coverage, for example, like Mrs.



Aucoin, or to get screening for newborns, or to get services for children with special needs without having to give your child up to the children's aid society, which was another major investigation he did. His reports have been very critical. Maybe that's what the government is trying to avoid or is worried about: that if under Bill 103 Mr. Marin's oversight is extended to police complaints, if there is a complaint that goes forward by a member of the public or by a member of a police force about systemic problems in the investigation process, systemic problems in the complaints process, maybe at the end of that process the government won't look so good, so the best way to ensure that doesn't happen is to have a restrictive provision in the legislation itself which forbids him to even get involved.

The problem is that it's not just Bill 103 where the government has very clearly shut down Mr. Marin from making investigations into other very important sectors of the Ontario economy. I want to give you two examples, because they are two I have dealt with in the recent past with respect to health legislation. Everybody knows, it goes without saying, that the budget of the Ministry of Health is far and away the largest in the province of Ontario. You want to ensure accountability with respect to that, and that's why you have an Auditor General who has the ability to do value-for-money audits. But from my perspective, because so much money is involved in the health care budget, surely any transparent government would also want to have in place oversight by the Ombudsman to look at systemic problems in the health care system, especially when from time to time facilities and institutions don't seem to be very interested in responding to complaints brought forward whether by patients in hospitals, by residents in long-term care, by clients who use home care, and the list goes on and on. In the last number of months there have been two health bills I have been dealing with where I felt very strongly, and so did others who came before the committee, that the Ombudsman should have his oversight extended to cover the health care matters we were dealing with.

The first has to do with Bill 140, a bill respecting long-term-care homes, which is finally going to see the light of day again tomorrow afternoon. I'll have the pleasure of continuing my remarks on that debate tomorrow afternoon.

But I can tell you, during the course of dealing with Bill 140, and our committee did do that during January, when we had some public hearings and then clause-by-clause for two days at the end of January, it was very clear from people who came forward, including consumers of health care services, residents councils, family councils, front-line staff, seniors organizations, that there was a very, very serious concern about the lack of independent oversight in the long-term-care sector now, both in terms of long-term-care homes and in terms of home care, and that what people felt needed to be done was to have independent oversight—not the long arm of government continuing to allegedly investigate complaints when that arm really wasn't, but to have a body,

an office, an organization that has the expertise, that has the track record, that has the staff and that has the mandate to thoroughly investigate complaints, individual and systemic, about the delivery of care and, secondly, that has the authority to act on those and force government change.

I just want to give you some flavour of that, as it was related to us as we dealt with Bill 140.

Here's a letter from as long ago as August 18, 2005. It was written by the Seniors Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care, a committee established by the Minister of Health and the minister responsible for seniors to provide advice and input to the government about seniors matters. They wrote to Ministers Smitherman and Bradley on August 18, 2005, and said:

"At its March 22, 2005, meeting,"—so over two years ago—"a motion was passed by we, the members of the Seniors Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care, in support of the government appointing a seniors' ombudsman for long-term-care home residents and people receiving home care services. Some members also supported expanding the mandate of the seniors' ombudsman to include all provincially funded programs servicing seniors.

"Representing more than one million seniors, the members of [our committee] support having a seniors' ombudsman to advocate for long-term-care home residents and to resolve consumer complaints about home care provided within Ontario communities. We feel that the current system, which relies solely on government staff, is simply not responsive enough to ensure that seniors' rights are protected in an objective and fair fashion. We recommend that the ombudsman be independent of any ministerial control or influence and would have the power to investigate concerns and, within reasonable constraints, direct the government to take remedial action when all other avenues have been exhausted."

This letter comes from an advisory committee of seniors organizations across Ontario that was established by the Minister of Health and the minister for seniors. This was the recommendation of the committee to them.

A number of the seniors' organizations that are part of this advisory committee came before the long-term-care committee and reinforced that very notion, that independence was required to deal with complaints in the long-term-care sector.

That was reinforced at the committee, for example, by the Royal Canadian Legion, the Ontario Command. They came to the committee and spoke, and they also sent letters. This one is written to Premier McGuinty, February 17, 2006: "Our experience as advocates for veterans has led us to conclude that some cases are never resolved through existing channels, and although we support resolutions of problems at the lowest level possible, some residents and families never receive resolution to valid complaints. Families are often handicapped in pursuing their complaint about the care of a loved one by a lack of access or the cost to access relevant files that would enable them to validate their concerns. At the end of the



day, there is no one with the investigative reach of the Ombudsman when all other efforts to resolve the problem have failed.”

I could read some more into the record. I’m going to do that tomorrow, when I talk about this failure in Bill 140. But can I tell you that as a result of hearing what so many groups, organizations and individuals had to say when they came to the committee, during the clause-by-clause, I, on behalf of my colleagues in the NDP, moved the following motion under section 35.1 of the bill: “The Ombudsman may exercise any functions with respect to the long-term-care home sector in Ontario that he or she may exercise with respect to any matter to which the Ombudsman Act applies.” I tried very desperately to have the oversight of the current Ombudsman office extended into the long-term-care sector, as per the many, many recommendations we received by presenters before the committee. Regrettably, the government members voted that down.

2040

It begs the question, what is the government afraid of in having the Ombudsman in Ontario investigate individual and systemic complaints that come from long-term-care homes or those who receive home care services? What is the government so afraid of that they would very specifically vote against an amendment that would allow that oversight to occur?

Just last week, the government did it again. Last week we were dealing with clause-by-clause of Bill 171, which is an omnibus bill that has many schedules and many new provisions. Again, during the course of the debate and the review, it became clear that we should have Ombudsman oversight of public hospitals. Indeed, the Public Hospitals Act has been opened up under Bill 171, so it was appropriate and clearly in order for me to move a motion asking for oversight of the current Ombudsman for the hospital sector.

I just want to read into the record some of the comments that were made in an interview that Mr. Marin had with the Toronto Star just before we started clause-by-clause. We started clause-by-clause on Monday, May 7; this was written Sunday, May 6, by Rob Cribb and Tanya Talaga. Let me read some of this into the record:

“Ontario is the only Canadian province where hospitals aren’t subject to the scrutiny of an ombudsman—an ‘extremely alarming’ oversight that compromises public safety, according to Ontario Ombudsman André Marin.

“‘Ontario is the poor cousin in Canada,’ Marin said in an interview with the Star. ‘Right now, we have zero oversight of hospitals. The fact that there is no oversight in an area that takes huge amounts of public funds is shocking to me....’

“Giving the Ombudsman’s office power to act as independent investigators is all about accountability. If an institution is getting public funds to perform a public duty, they should be subjected to checks and balances, he said.” Besides hospitals, Marin believes he should have “oversight powers in long-term-care facilities, nursing

homes and child protection services.” My colleague Ms. Horwath has already referenced the child protection services.

“‘I [would] go in, take a complaint, apply reasonable common sense, use the resources of my offices and make recommendations,’ he said. ‘The government talks a storm about oversights, supports, checks and balances and so on. But, considering Ontario, especially Toronto, is the economic heart of the country, this is a thriving province, we pride ourselves on setting standards.... We do very poorly in independent oversight....’

“Marin said he’s made repeated requests to Premier Dalton McGuinty and the province’s top bureaucrats for the right to investigate public complaints, decisions and quality of care issues in hospitals—powers enjoyed by ombudsmen in the nine other provinces....

“Marin asked: ‘Why would a government not want to bring scrutiny in an area costing the provincial purse tens of billions of dollars? The short answer is if you can do your work without someone looking over your shoulder, why would you want to have someone look over your shoulder? They are doing it without oversight because they can. It is as simple as that.’”

He is absolutely right, which is why I moved an amendment to Bill 171 last week in committee, requesting that Ombudsman oversight be extended to hospitals. Again, the government members en masse voted that down.

This is an ongoing problem which now appears in Bill 103, again the government very specifically referencing in Bill 103 that the Ombudsman would not have oversight. It begs the question, if the process is so good, if the new process is going to work so well, what’s the problem? What’s the fear? Why won’t we put in place independent oversight so that members of the public and members of the police force can have a final place to go with respect to systemic complaints? I don’t understand the rationale for not wanting to do that.

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words on this bill. I had the opportunity to chair the clause-by-clause section when we were at committee. There was quite a lot of discussion on this by all three parties. In the end, I think we struck a pretty good balance, a fair balance and a balance that recognizes the concerns of the police as well as the concerns of the public.

The act itself, An Act to establish an Independent Police Review Director and create a new public complaints process, is something that I think is important for the province of Ontario. The general gist of this bill is that it seeks to provide a police review system that has the confidence and respect of both the public and the police.

We had many good deputations. We heard from members of the police and members of the public. There seemed to be general agreement on the general principles behind the drafting of this bill and why we need it. I think other speakers in tonight’s debate have already made clear what the thinking behind this bill is. Simply put, if a

person, a member of the general public, is unhappy with the conduct of a policeman or a policewoman, they can go to the independent director, who would have the power to investigate the complaint. If somebody, for example, felt they'd been mistreated by a police officer and didn't feel comfortable going to the police station in their community, they could go to this independent director. The independent director would review the matter and determine whether to investigate further or to refer it to the police chief in that local area or whether to stop it and not go further with the complaint if it was a frivolous complaint. It works both ways. It doesn't mean that every single complaint that somebody has would go through this process. For example, if someone gets a parking ticket and is unhappy, they can't just walk into the police station and say, "I want to see the independent director and complain about this parking ticket." It has to do with the conduct and the work done by police services and the way they work with our communities here in Ontario.

I think this bill in front of us today really gives the public an opportunity to go directly to this independent individual who would be set up—the director—or, on the other hand, go to a police station and complain as well directly to the police station.

I wanted to address one quick issue in this bill, and that is why the Ombudsman was not given jurisdiction. We know the Ombudsman well here in Ontario. The Ombudsman and the Ombudsman's office has done excellent work here in Ontario, without a doubt. But in this case, I think that giving the Ombudsman jurisdiction would be providing oversight on an overseer, because the director who would be in charge of this act and executing the sections of the act would then have the opportunity to deal with complaints and to do them without someone overseeing them. If someone is not happy with the work of the independent director, they still have the option of going to court and applying for judicial review. It doesn't block someone—if they're unhappy with the work done by the independent director—from going there. Ultimately, we've decided, the government has decided, that we want this person who is being placed in this high and responsible position to be able to carry out their work and do it effectively with some independence and not have to look behind their back to see if an Ombudsman is watching what they're doing.

We have been able to put in former Chief Justice LeSage's recommendations where legislative change is necessary. I think that's a good thing. This first went to Chief Justice LeSage's hands, and he came back with recommendations. We've implemented them into this bill. When it went to committee, we did put some of the amendments through; as Chair, I noticed that. I think we've come up with a very good bill. In short, it's

supportable. I'm happy that we're able to vote on this bill here today, and I wholeheartedly support it.

**The Acting Speaker:** Is there any further debate? Seeing none, Mr. Bradley has moved government motion number 363. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. There will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 2050 to 2100.*

**Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour):** Members, please take your seats.

**The Acting Speaker:** Members please take their seats—and my thanks to the assistant deputy speaker over there.

The government House leader has moved government motion number 363. All those in favour will please stand and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Balkissoon, Bas  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Brownell, Jim  
Chan, Michael  
Delaney, Bob  
Duguid, Brad  
Duncan, Dwight  
Fonseca, Peter  
Hoy, Pat

Jeffrey, Linda  
Leal, Jeff  
Levac, Dave  
Marsales, Judy  
Matthews, Deborah  
McNeely, Phil  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Patten, Richard

Peters, Steve  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Ramal, Khalil  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Smith, Monique  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Zimmer, David

**The Acting Speaker:** Those opposed will please stand and be recorded.

#### Nays

Dunlop, Garfield  
Elliott, Christine  
Horwath, Andrea

Kormos, Peter  
Martel, Shelley  
Martiniuk, Gerry

Miller, Norm  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Savoline, Joyce

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** The ayes are 30; the nays are 9.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Orders of the day.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I move adjournment of the House.

**Mr. Kormos:** Liberals don't want to work; Liberals just don't want to work.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Order please. Order.

Mr. Bradley has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

I think the ayes have it. Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

*The House adjourned at 2103.*



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of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

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(Hansard)**

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des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 15 May 2007**

**Mardi 15 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 15 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 15 mai 2007

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** A few weeks ago, I met with a number of electrical contractors in my riding who want to provide training opportunities for young Ontarians to become electricians but are stopped from doing so by the McGuinty government's unfair restrictions.

The McGuinty government, in a sop to unions that contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to their 2003 election, has refused to accept a one-to-one ratio between journeymen and electrical apprentices, thereby eliminating the number of apprentices that smaller, non-unionized companies can hire.

All other provinces and territories have accepted a one-to-one ratio, but the McGuinty government, in an unseemly quid pro quo with the unions, has claimed its implementation would be unsafe, despite the absence of any documentation to back up that claim.

This McGuinty government is using an unsupportable claim—lack of safety—to justify a politically motivated and harmful policy. As a result, many small businesses are hurt and, most importantly, many young Ontarians are losing opportunities to become members of a well-respected trade that can provide a rewarding career.

The time is long overdue for the McGuinty Liberal government to do the right thing: Join all other provinces and territories and adopt the one-to-one ratio.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The member for Davenport.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I rise in the House today to discuss the issue of the York subway line and the third party's desire to kill the progress that the McGuinty Liberals have made for GTA and York region commuters and students—and thank you for clapping for this.

The McGuinty Liberals have recognized the need for a more efficient transit plan, and we are moving in the right direction. We know that the subway extension will provide a much-anticipated and much-needed service to

those travelling in and out of the region. As a result, we have come to the table with the funds and the plan to do so.

The NDP claims to be an advocate for the environment, but instead of providing an inexpensive, clean mode of transportation for commuters, the leader of the third party intends to keep Ontarians in their cars and away from their families.

The McGuinty Liberals believe that the York subway line will provide more opportunities for not just those in the GTA and York region, but also those in the north, through creating jobs for northern workers at the Bombardier plant. We understand that Ontarians want to see a healthy Ontario with less gridlock, clean air and ever-expanding opportunities.

### FOREST FIREFIGHTING

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I rise today to draw attention to the forest fires that are raging in northwestern Ontario and threatening surrounding communities. The central line of defence against forest fires in Ontario is the Ministry of Natural Resources's fire crews. This poses a problem, however, as recently both the Environmental Commissioner, Gord Miller, and Andy Houser, the former MNR director of fish and wild-life, confirmed that the ministry is severely underfunded and understaffed. The recent Liberal budget chose to slash the MNR by \$36 million—from \$762 million last year to \$726 million this year. It now looks like this year's forest fires will be worse than last year's.

The MNR does not have the resources to properly deal with the fires that are currently blazing through northern Ontario. On site, MNR firefighting crews have been getting support from 130 firefighters from BC, and another 100 firefighters and water bombers are expected from Alberta. Newspaper headlines all point to the severity of the current situation: "Wildfires Sweeping Province's Northwest," "Lightning Threatens to Spark New Blazes" and "Northern Infernos" are just a few. Minister, rather than continuing to spin the MNR budget, please just confirm that the MNR budget was slashed by \$36 million and explain to Ontario residents how you intend to meet your mandate.

### CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** Today I'll be bringing forth a bill limiting the interest a payday loan company can charge to 35% and also requiring them



to be regulated. The McGuinty Liberals have only asked payday loan companies to post rates, which is adding insult to injury for those who are preyed upon by these so-called businesses.

I'm delighted to welcome ACORN, an anti-poverty activist organization, and Sharon Shrieve, who's here in the members' gallery. She is the president of their west-end chapter. They've done extensive work on payday loan companies. Many of my constituents who are among the most needy, those who are on ODSP or OW, those who try to pay their rent and feed their children on minimum wage, are kept in a state of perpetual debt simply so that they might have a small advance on their pay.

"One thousand per cent interest is 1,000% wrong," wrote Carol Goar in the *Toronto Star*, and I absolutely agree. I urge this House to pass the Payday Loans Act, 2007, as soon as possible. Stop legalized loansharking in Ontario.

#### JACK BURROWS

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** On Thursday night, the Kiwanis Club of North Bay honoured the former mayor of North Bay, Jack Burrows, as the citizen of the year. Jack is without a doubt a true community leader, and over 250 people from our community came out to celebrate his contributions to the North Bay area and those of his wife of 51 years, Elaine.

Jack served on North Bay city council for 15 years, eight of those as mayor. During his time as mayor, he helped to ensure that our Canadian Forces base did not leave North Bay, and he moved our waterfront redevelopment forward—two of many lasting legacies.

Jack was the chair of the North Bay Civic Hospital board for five years and served on the board for 12. He's a long-time member of the Rotary Club, he's on the board of the Sports Hall of Fame, the WKP Kennedy gallery and the northern Ontario heritage fund.

He was born and raised in North Bay and has run his business there for over 40 years.

At the dinner on Thursday night, words such as "classy," "a man with integrity," "friendly," "wise" and "gracious" were used repeatedly in describing Jack. I had the opportunity to congratulate Jack on behalf of the province, to thank him for being so gracious to me when I was first elected and for all the work that he's done for our community.

Not one to rest on his laurels, the very next day, on Friday, Jack Burrows and a group of community leaders launched the North Bay community foundation, a foundation that will raise money locally, invest the funds and spend the interest on projects in our area. I was delighted to be at the launch of the foundation and to announce that the foundation has received Trillium funding to help it get off the ground.

Congratulations to Jack and Elaine, and thank you for all the time, energy, enthusiasm and lasting legacies you have given to the North Bay community.

1340

#### OTTAWA SENATORS

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** Yesterday, many government members commented on Mr. Tory's visit to Ottawa. They accused the former Harris government of mistreating Ottawa. I want to bring that to the present, and I want to present a memento of the series between the Ottawa Senators and the Buffalo Sabres to my friend Jim Bradley. From time to time, Jim likes to explain or spin excuses for underperformance of the teams he supports. I want to help him out.

The Buffalo Sabres are down 3 to zip in the Stanley Cup playoffs because of—wait for it—Mike Harris, Jim Bradley's favourite excuse. If Mike Harris had not come to the assistance and rescue of the Ottawa Senators in his time as Premier when times were tough, the Ottawa Senators wouldn't be in Ottawa; they'd be in the United States. The Sabres wouldn't be facing the 20,000-plus fans who avidly support their hockey team. Canada wouldn't have a team in the playoffs.

Jim, here's a T-shirt to help you with the spin: "Blame Ottawa's success on Mike Harris."

#### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** When I was elected as MPP for Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh in 2003, I had the redevelopment of my riding's three hospitals as my top priority. For too long, the people of Cornwall and Winchester and points between had been promised development for the St. Joseph's Complex Continuing Care Centre, the Cornwall Community Hospital and the Winchester District Memorial Hospital that never materialized.

The citizens in my riding and I had found a good friend in Health Minister George Smitherman, who understood what those hospitals meant to our community. St. Joseph's centre is now well under construction. I had the opportunity yesterday to cut the ribbon on the first phase of the early works development at the Cornwall Community Hospital, with the rest of the project slated to start in 2008. And it was my privilege to announce yesterday that the Winchester District Memorial Hospital is going to tender, looking toward the first shovel in the ground this summer.

With these three hospital projects, a new community health centre and other health care supports, my riding is undergoing a health care renaissance that will ensure that my constituents have access to some of the finest health care facilities anywhere in Ontario. These redeveloped hospitals will serve as another attraction to businesses and families looking for a place to settle.

The McGuinty government has demonstrated that it understands the needs of eastern Ontario and is willing to act on them. I want to thank my friend the Minister of Health and all the staff, volunteers and board members of the three hospitals for the work they have done in reshaping

ing the health care landscape in Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh.

## ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I rise in the House today to talk about the economic capacity of this great province of Ontario. We have a plan and it's working. We're investing in schools, in apprenticeships and job skills training, and in our colleges and universities, because a highly skilled labour force is a highly competitive labour force.

We're improving our health care system every day. This makes us a more attractive location to set up business.

We're also investing in research and innovation to ensure our place in the economy and the future. While our manufacturing sector faces stiff international competition, we will stay the course on our strategy to support projects expected to yield the greatest results for Ontario.

Unfortunately, when the leader of the third party sat at the cabinet table, job prospects in Ontario were almost non-existent. You were more likely to have your contract ripped up than renewed. He now wants to create a jobs commissioner, the same position that was cancelled in British Columbia.

We prefer to put money into proven programs that help retain and create jobs in Ontario, such as our AMIS and OASIS programs. Through AMIS, or advanced manufacturing investment strategy, we've supported eight innovative projects that will generate almost \$370 million in new investments and support the creation or retention of about 3,000 jobs.

Unlike the leader of the third party—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. David Oraziotti (Sault Ste. Marie):** I would like to comment on the NDP's dismal and regressive stance on the environment. As discussed in yesterday's Toronto Star column, environmental groups are now speaking out against some of the third party's environmental stances, including their contradictory position on coal—come on, make up your mind.

The leader of the third party's embarrassing display during a press conference on his climate change plan also served as further proof that the NDP are putting their partisan agenda above Ontarians' needs. It's clear that the NDP are not serious about the environment or tackling climate change; they're only interested in scoring cheap political points.

The leader of the third party continues his constant flip-flopping on coal plants and his belief that they should be shut down in the south and kept open in the north. The NDP also voted against the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act, which would put mechanisms in place to give Ontarians greater control over their energy use and cost.

Their record while in government was abysmal. They cut \$500 million out of the Ministry of the Environment budget, cancelled conservation programs that would have saved 5,200 megawatts, and pledged to enact a safe drinking water act but never did.

The McGuinty government has shown real leadership on the environment. We have passed the Clean Water Act and the Greenbelt Act and updated the parks act for the first time in 50 years. We have increased water inspection staff by 25%, implemented a deposit-return system at the LCBO and brought in hundreds of new megawatts of clean energy. That's real leadership.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### PAYDAY LOANS ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR LES PRÊTS SUR SALAIRE

Ms. DiNovo moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 224, An Act respecting payday loans / Projet de loi 224, Loi traitant des prêts sur salaire.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** In an editorial on Wednesday, May 2, the Toronto Star wrote: "Crack Down on Payday Gouging"

"When Kim Elliott first borrowed \$250 from a payday lender after her partner lost his job, she had no idea that the couple would entangle themselves in an escalating series of loans that would ultimately cost them \$20,000 in interest and fees in less than three years....

"Queen's Park should now use the powers Ottawa has conferred"—

**The Speaker:** The member needs to just describe the bill.

**Ms. DiNovo:** Sorry, I was setting it up. What I'm trying to do in this bill is cap at 35% the interest rate charged by legalized loansharking companies, called payday loan companies. This is what Quebec has done; this is what we should do. This is what the federal government has asked us to do, and yet this government refuses to do it. All they in fact have done—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

### BONE MARROW AWARENESS MONTH ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR LE MOIS DE LA SENSIBILISATION AU DON DE MOELLE OSSEUSE

Mr. Crozier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 225, An Act to make the month of November Bone Marrow Awareness Month / Projet de loi 225, Loi



visant à désigner le mois de novembre Mois de la sensibilisation au don de moelle osseuse.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** Making the month of November Bone Marrow Awareness Month supports the work of both the Canadian Blood Services and the Katelyn Bedard Bone Marrow Association by raising awareness of the need to increase the size of the volunteer donor pool in order to better the chances of finding a matching bone marrow donor for every patient in need of a transplant.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I move that, notwithstanding any other order of the House, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Caplan has moved government notice of motion 355. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1351 to 1356.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Hoy, Pat	Pupatello, Sandra
Balkissoon, Bas	Jeffrey, Linda	Qaadi, Shafiq
Bentley, Christopher	Kular, Kuldeep	Racco, Mario G.
Bountrogianni, Marie	Kwinter, Monte	Ramal, Khalil
Brownell, Jim	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Rinaldi, Lou
Cansfield, Donna H.	Levac, Dave	Ruprecht, Tony
Caplan, David	Marsales, Judy	Sergio, Mario
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Matthews, Deborah	Smith, Monique
Colle, Mike	Mauro, Bill	Smitherman, George
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Mitchell, Carol	Van Bommel, Maria
Di Cocco, Caroline	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Watson, Jim
Dombrowsky, Leona	Oraziotti, David	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	Patten, Richard	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Peters, Steve	Zimmer, David
Fonseca, Peter	Phillips, Gerry	

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Arnett, Ted	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Barrett, Toby	MacLeod, Lisa	Runciman, Robert W.
Chudleigh, Ted	Marchese, Rosario	Savoline, Joyce
DiNovo, Cheri	Martel, Shelley	Scott, Laurie
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norm	Tabuns, Peter
Ferreira, Paul	Munro, Julia	Tascona, Joseph N.
Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John	
Klees, Frank	Ouellette, Jerry J.	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 47; the nays are 22.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### ELECTORAL REFORM RÉFORME ÉLECTORALE

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** I'm pleased to rise today to announce that this morning I received the final report and recommendation from Ontario's Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. This report marks the success of the most ambitious and far-reaching democratic renewal initiative in Ontario's history.

Au cours des huit derniers mois, 103 Ontariens et Ontariennes se sont réunis presque tous les deux week-ends pour se renseigner sur les systèmes électoraux, délibérer et, finalement, présenter une recommandation à la population ontarienne.

These individuals also led public consultations in their own communities across the province. They wanted all Ontarians to have a chance to voice their opinion on the way we elect our MPPs. In total, over 30 public consultation meetings were held across the province. I had the chance to attend the meeting held in Hamilton and was very impressed by the level of discourse, understanding and passion on this important topic.

I've also been impressed by the sense of commitment and enthusiasm by the members of the citizens' assembly. When I met with the assembly members two weeks ago, they told me this experience had been a privilege. They undertook their responsibility to consider this important decision on behalf of their fellow Ontarians with all due respect and seriousness.

I'm sure all members on both sides of the aisle can agree that this has truly been democracy in action; a democracy that belongs to Ontarians, not just their elected officials.

This is the McGuinty government's vision of Ontario's democracy. It's a democracy where each citizen participates in building a better society and each elected official takes responsibility for strengthening the voice of the citizens they serve.

Accepting this task did not come without its sacrifices. For some assembly members, it meant previous time away from their families, their children, spouses and friends. For others, it meant postponing holidays and vacations such as March break. It also meant long hours of travel from all across the province to get to the Toronto meetings. Work schedules and child care responsibilities had to be juggled.

I'm really proud and honoured to say that some of the assembly members are with us here today. Please show your appreciation for the work they have done.

Some of the members even continued to work through tragic personal loss and illness.

Pour tout cela et leur dur travail, je désire remercier les membres de l'Assemblée des citoyens.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to tell you that there are a number of members here today—I just thanked you again. So there we go again. Sorry.

I'd also like to acknowledge the citizens' assembly secretariat for their contribution and once again point to a number who are in the gallery today. Where's the secretariat? Wherever they are, thank you very much.

I'd like to extend a special thanks to George Thomson, chair of the citizens' assembly. His steadfast belief in the process and exceptional leadership were essential to the success of this assembly.

In the months ahead, I invite all Ontarians to participate in this unprecedented examination of our electoral system. I look forward to reading this report and reviewing its recommendation.

L'Assemblée des citoyens a proposé un autre système électoral sur lequel la population sera appelée à se prononcer. En effet, tous les citoyens de la province auront la possibilité de faire un choix en votant au référendum, qui coïncidera avec les prochaines élections provinciales, le 10 octobre 2007.

Bill 218, if passed, requires the Chief Electoral Officer, an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly, to undertake this education campaign. If this legislation is passed, Elections Ontario will deliver a neutral public education campaign to raise awareness of the referendum and to educate the public about the alternatives under consideration.

On behalf of all Ontarians and all the members of this House, once again, thank you to the citizens' assembly for all your hard work and dedication.

### IMPAIRED DRIVERS

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Transportation):** I rise in the House today to speak about the Ontario Community Council on Impaired Driving's Arrive Alive—Drive Sober campaign. This campaign is a great tool to raise awareness and to remind drivers that drinking and driving do not mix. This year, the campaign is also focusing on the fact that drinking and boating is just as dangerous.

In 2006, alcohol was a factor in approximately 38% of the fatal boating incidents in Ontario. In fact, 36 people died in boating incidents that year. That's why, last year, I was pleased to see the passage of legislation that tackles drinking and boating.

In the very first boating season after the new laws were passed, 40 boat operators were charged with impaired operation of a vessel and also received an immediate 90-day administrative driver's licence suspension. So, if you're caught drinking and operating a motorized or non-motorized boat, you will be subject to the same penalties as drinking and driving. These include an immediate 12-hour suspension of your driver's licence if you register in

the "warn" range—that's .05 to .08 blood alcohol concentration, or the BAC, and a 90-day suspension of your driver's licence if you register over the .08 BAC. You'll have a one-year suspension of your driver's licence the first time you are convicted of an alcohol-related Criminal Code charge, and you will be hit with a large increase in your insurance premiums.

These programs apply to anyone convicted of operating a boat while impaired, including power boats, jet skis, dinghies, canoes and sailboats. Depending on the number of times they've been convicted of driving while impaired, a person could lose their driver's licence for life.

Ontario has some of the toughest drinking and driving laws in Canada. On top of the driver's licence suspensions I've just mentioned, we have a mandatory ignition interlock program, mandatory alcohol assessment, education or treatment and follow-up, and a vehicle can be impounded if a person is caught driving while their driver's licence is under suspension for a Criminal Code driving-related offence.

Our government wants to make our laws even tougher. Last month, I introduced legislation in this House to protect Ontarians from drinking drivers. If passed, this legislation would increase roadside driver's licence suspensions for drunk drivers, allowing the courts to take vehicles away from repeated drinking and driving offenders and establish an early ignition interlock program for Criminal Code offenders.

With this proposed legislation, the McGuinty government is delivering on its commitment to ensure that Ontario builds upon its successful record as a leader in road safety by keeping our communities safe and by keeping our families safe. But we need more than legislation; keeping people's feet to the fire on this issue is critical. That's why I was so pleased to note that Phil McNeely, my parliamentary assistant, was with the council this morning to help launch their campaign and their passport to safety—a long advocate of ensuring that we have safety on our roads.

This passport, which is nice and small and folds neatly anywhere, has some great tips for having fun responsibly. As well, it also has a clear reminder of the costs of drinking and driving. The council's message is simple: Drunk drivers have no place on Ontario's roads or Ontario's waterways.

Before I conclude, I would especially like to thank our police and fire and paramedics for the hard work that they do in keeping Ontarians safe on our roads. We will continue to raise public awareness among young people and among all drivers on this issue. Let's work together to convince people to make responsible choices this summer, be it on land or on water.

### AMATEUR SPORT LE SPORT AMATEUR

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I had the pleasure today of hosting a reception honouring



the achievements of Team Ontario and its first-place win at the 2007 Canada Winter Games in Whitehorse, Yukon.

I'd like to draw to the attention, in the members' galleries on both sides, athletes, coaches, managers and mission staff who did this province very proud and won the Canada Winter Games flag. Please give a warm welcome to our athletes and our coaches. Stand up.

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I was especially pleased that parents, friends and supporters of our Team Ontario members also joined the reception to celebrate the achievement of these fine ambassadors for sport and healthy living. We just have a fraction of the number of individuals who were able to join us. We had about 150 athletes in the Macdonald Block earlier today, out of about 300 from all of Team Ontario. I was pleased that a number of MPPs from all parties were able to attend, including Premier McGuinty, who came by to wish the young people the very best. I was also pleased that they were joined by many coaches and managers and supporters of Team Ontario.

L'année 2007 était la huitième année où Équipe Ontario rapportait le drapeau des Jeux d'hiver du Canada, une réalisation extraordinaire, d'autant plus extraordinaire avec un grand total de 112 médailles, dont 37 médailles d'or, 35 d'argent et 40 de bronze, sans compter la réalisation d'exploits personnels pour beaucoup d'athlètes.

Tous les Ontariens sont fiers de ces réalisations. Les membres d'Équipe Ontario sont des modèles qui inspirent les Ontariens et Ontariennes, peu importe leur âge et leurs aptitudes, à être physiquement actifs et à pratiquer des sports.

Mr. Speaker, 2007 was the eighth time that Team Ontario has brought home the Canada Winter Games flag, an outstanding achievement this year, with a total of 37 gold medals, 35 silver medals and 40 bronze medals, for an amazing 112 medals in all and many new personal bests.

All Ontarians are proud of these achievements. Team Ontario members are role models and inspire Ontarians of all ages and abilities to be physically active and to participate in sport. These athletes are shining examples of youth reaching their full potential. All of them are balancing school, work and athletic excellence.

Just this morning I received an e-mail from a father of an athlete who left yesterday for Amsterdam to represent Canada as part of our national women's rugby team. He wrote, "I am reminded that I have been remiss in not writing to the minister to thank the government" of Ontario "for the Quest for Gold program. It has made a real difference in helping her to participate." He also passed along his best wishes and sincere thanks to our Premier and the finance minister.

I also want to congratulate Team Ontario's chef de mission, Blair McIntosh from the Sport Alliance of Ontario, and an employee of the Ministry of Health Promotion, Anita Comella, the assistant chef de mission, for a job well done. The Ontario mission was presented with the Claude Hardy Award, which recognizes the

talent and dedication of a mission team at a given Canada Games. Congratulations to those very fine individuals and all of the volunteers.

Le gouvernement McGuinty, par le biais du ministère de la Promotion de la santé, accorde une grande importance aux sports amateurs, car nous reconnaissons le rôle important du sport dans nos collectivités et ses bienfaits pour la santé physique et mentale des gens.

Cette année, un certain nombre de programmes et services de financement offriront un appui de 23,5 \$ millions au sport amateur.

The government, through the Ministry of Health Promotion, is committed to amateur athletics because we recognize the significant role that sport plays in our communities and the contribution it makes to people's physical and mental health. This year, the number of funding programs and services we will provide to amateur sport includes \$23.5 million in financial assistance.

We marked a notable achievement just this past February. I had the pleasure of announcing an impressive and substantial milestone for Ontario's athlete funding. In 2006-07, funding for the Quest for Gold program was close to \$10 million. This represents the single largest funding announcement in support of athletes in Ontario sport history. Approximately \$7 million of the Quest for Gold funding was provided directly to Ontario athletes through the Ontario athlete assistance program. This means that more than 950 of Ontario's amateur athletes received between \$3,500 and \$8,000 to cover living, training and post-secondary tuition costs from the program. The balance of the funding was directed to enhance coaching and training and competitive opportunities.

I am equally excited about the fact that Minister Sorbara, on behalf of Premier McGuinty, announced an additional \$10 million for the Quest for Gold program for the next fiscal year. This investment sends a signal to the athletic community that we are in the business of supporting amateur sport. We'll continue to work with our provincial and multisport organizations. I thank Jim Bradley—not the Jim Bradley we know, but Jim Bradley the president of the Sport Alliance of Ontario—and Doug Rosser, the chair of the Sport Alliance of Ontario, for the work they do to help our ministry to develop our athletes from playground to podium and provide resources and training opportunities for coaches and sport leaders.

We want to make physical activity fun and accessible for all. I'm proud of the action this government is taking to improve participation in amateur sports throughout the province of Ontario, but we certainly recognize that there is much more work to be done.

In conclusion, these athletes, coaches and managers have done all of Ontario proud. I'm particularly proud I have Ms. Kreviazuk, a member my riding, here today. She has a famous cousin, Chantal Kreviazuk, but today she is the famous Kreviazuk because she went out and won a gold medal for Ottawa from the riding of Ottawa West-Nepean.

At an early age, these young athletes and their supporters dedicated themselves to the pursuit of high-level



physical performance and excellence. They are here today in the Legislative Assembly as role models for all Ontarians.

I want to sincerely thank you for taking time out of your schedules. Thank you to the mission staff and thank you to the parents, as Premier McGuinty said earlier today. They wouldn't be able to succeed without the financial, emotional and passionate support of the parents and family members. We're very, very proud of you. Thank you for being here, and continued success. Merci beaucoup.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses?

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** First of all, on behalf of John Tory and the Progressive Conservative caucus of Ontario, I'd like to congratulate the Team Ontario athletes. I'm particularly proud that I had 11 representatives on those teams from the area I represent, Lanark–Carleton. In particular, I would like to congratulate both Jennifer Dunev and Jennifer Klowak, who are both bronze and silver medal winners in fencing. I want to tell them that I will be calling them tomorrow to use their skills in the upcoming provincial campaign.

I want to thank all of the athletes and their parents for their dedication.

#### ELECTORAL REFORM

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** Next, I want to briefly respond to the minister responsible for democratic renewal. It's somewhat illustrative that many members of the citizens' assembly who were here for the minister's statement have left at this particular time. That is a show of exactly how this process has gone from start to finish, and that has been that it's a Liberal government process from the beginning, through the legislation to the end.

The ability of the Legislature to alter this process, to have input into this process, has been limited at best. Look at the last three pieces of legislation for democratic renewal. One bill, former Bill 62, was pulled by the government and put into schedule 11 of the budget bill, buried way, way back in the—what has democratic renewal got to do with the budget bill? Nothing, yet it's hidden in there.

Debate on Bill 155, which sets out the referendum rule: guillotined by the government, limiting debate in the Legislature on a democratic renewal forum. What's going to happen to Bill 218, another one dealing with our election process? It was time-allocated, guillotined in terms of debate in this Legislature.

We congratulate all the members of the citizens' assembly for what they did for the government of Ontario. We know they worked hard to come up with their proposals. But they should know that this is a Liberal government initiative. The question they are going to put to the people of Ontario will not be approved by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario; it will be approved by the Liberal cabinet only. We find that distasteful and it puts great question into the whole process.

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#### IMPAIRED DRIVERS

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** It's my privilege to respond to the Minister of Transportation on behalf of the opposition and our leader, John Tory. We would like to pay tribute to the members of the community who have worked hard to prevent impaired driving and to commend the Ontario Community Council on Impaired Driving for their leadership and programs they have delivered to reduce—or eliminate, indeed—impaired driving in Ontario. Through its Arrive Alive program, there is an increased awareness in death and injury caused by impaired driving.

Impaired driving, people should know, is Canada's number one criminal cause of death. On average, over four Canadians each day are killed.

Unfortunately, the McGuinty government has cut the funding to OCCID, along with that of the Ontario Safety League, which they have continued to argue—it is about time they finally recognized the member from Oak Ridges, Frank Klees, for the work he has done on Bill 203, which is being debated in this House as we speak, to make our roadways safer in Ontario, and also to recognize the good work done by the member from Simcoe North, Garfield Dunlop, on his initiative on ignition interlock, which again is part of the defence against impaired driving.

It's very clear, in response to the minister, that preventing impaired driving is a community responsibility. It takes police, parents and all civil-minded people to work together to get this right. Finally, after some time, they have recognized the work done by the previous Minister of Transportation, Frank Klees.

#### AMATEUR SPORT

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** In the little time I have left I also want to pay respect to the citizens of the 2007 Canada Winter Games from my riding, great youth role models: Tyler Cuma, Colin Fish, Jerome Gabriel, Caitlyn Hellingman, Andrea Madgett, Kyle Matuk, Robert Nelson, Robert Scott, and Tara Watchorn. Thank you for your leadership and youth in action program.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** On behalf of New Democrats, I congratulate the Team Ontario athletes for their outstanding performance and victories at the 2007 Canada Winter Games in Whitehorse.

I'm sorry to see that some of the athletes were ushered out before the opposition had a chance to make their comments, so I hope that the Hansards will be sent to them because we did want all of them to hear what we had to say.

We are thrilled to see you here; we are very glad that many more of you were also here earlier on to be publicly acknowledged in a very formal way: the athletes, coaches, managers and supporters.

To our youth athletes who are here, I want you to know that we are very proud of your ability, your talents,



your dedication and your commitment—most of all for your incredible energy to balance your work, school and athletic abilities all at the same time. I'm not sure how all of you do that.

Secondly, to the coaches and managers who serve as mentors to these young athletes, we thank you for your tremendous work in inspiring these athletes to be the best they can be and to still have fun.

Finally, last but not least, to the parents who sacrifice a great deal of time and money to support your sons and daughters: There isn't a more important job that you could do as parents to help your child realize their goals, and we thank you for that very important work that you do.

We say to all of the athletes who are still here, we know that we will hear many great things about all of you in the future and we look forward to that. Thank you for being here today.

### ELECTORAL REFORM

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** In response to the minister for democratic renewal, I had the opportunity this morning to be at Hart House and to meet 60 or so of the members of the citizens' assembly, 60 out of the 104 who actually participated.

I want to preface all of my remarks by thanking them from the bottom of our hearts for what they did over all these weekends, what they did over all of this period of time—the time they spent away from their families, the time that they spent studying and working, the time that they spent trying to come up with a new system, perhaps a better system, for the people of the province of Ontario.

I am mindful about what I saw on page 16 of the report. I have had a chance to read it in its fullness, not once but twice. The people came from all over the country: 66 from Ontario, 11 from other provinces and a remarkable 27 from outside of Canada, where they were born. They speak many languages; they have many, many occupations, but they came together as one group, and they came together to make a difference. They came together, in the end, perhaps, to challenge the orthodoxy of an institution which has, remarkably and justifiably, served Ontarians and Canadians well throughout our entire history, but in fact an institution that is now 750-plus years old and which perhaps is in need of change. There is no doubt that they have served us well, but time and expectations change and so did the attitudes of these 104 people.

The minister has said in her speech, "I look forward to reading the citizens' assembly's report and reviewing its recommendations." I don't know, maybe I'm a faster reader, but I've already had a chance to do that and I'd just like to say that the opportunity today is upon us.

I had an opportunity to meet Catherine Baquero, who was the representative from Beaches–East York. In fact, it was my first opportunity to meet her. She was a delightful young citizen. I had an opportunity to hear George Thomson, as the chair, outline the process. I had

an opportunity to meet the secretariat and the people who worked so hard, and I had the an opportunity to read the 27-page report.

The recommendations are found near the end of the report, I believe on page 25 or thereabouts, and there are 10. The fundamental one, of course, is the institution of a mixed member proportional system, and there are 10 sub-recommendations which will take us to that recommendation, and perhaps—and I hope—a better system. The citizens are to be commended.

But in the 49 seconds I have left, I have to ask about the government and their commitment. We have three bills before us. We have a question which has yet to be decided and which is the sole prerogative of the minister and not of this Legislature—the only Legislature in Canada that has not had an opportunity to debate the question. No amount of money has been apportioned. The citizens recommended some \$13 million; there is no budgeted amount. And last but not least, there is the 60% threshold, which in our view is unconscionable. Some of the citizens today told me that the 60% was perhaps too high a threshold to actually see change.

I commend them for giving us voter choice, fair election results and local representation in their recommendations.

### VISITOR

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: One of our pages, Sridaya, has her mother, Sandhya Srivatsan, here in the Legislature. I would like to welcome her because the page is very proud of her.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### YEAR-END GRANTS

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier and it concerns the McGuinty government's year-end spending. The Minister of Finance provided us with a list last Thursday that shows that over the last two years, the Premier's government has spent nearly \$4 billion in a last-minute mad rush: \$2.4 billion in 2005-06 and \$1.4 billion in 2006-07. This past December, the Auditor General slapped the McGuinty government's wrists for this practice, but the government continues to do it.

My question for the Premier is this: So we can all see just how fast this money was rushed out the door, and knowing the government has an obligation under the standing orders to publish these treasury orders eventually in any event, will the Premier make public the treasury board orders or other spending orders authorizing this mad rush, year-end spending?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'll refer this to the Minister of Finance.



**Hon. Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** Let me just tell my friend what he already knows, that all expenditures of the government occurring any time during the year become part of the public accounts of the province of Ontario, and those are published every year within 180 days of the presentation of the budget. That's a new provision, part of our program of transparency, and indeed, the expenditures for 2005-06 were published in last year's public accounts. But let me tell him that every single one of those expenditures supports the programs of this government, whether it's in the area of education, post-secondary education, community and social services, energy, government services or any other ministry.

**Mr. Tory:** As is the custom, that was not an answer to the question. We all know that the public accounts ultimately contain all of the expenditures of the government, six months later. We also know, however, that many of these expenditures made in a big rush at the end of the year were authorized by treasury board or other authorizations. All we're asking is, why don't you show us those so we can see how fast you spent the money, when you spent it and so on?

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The Auditor General, in his report this past December, said, "In many cases, normal accountability and control provisions were reduced or eliminated to ensure the transfers would qualify for immediate expensing prior to the ... fiscal year-end." He also went on to say, "We continue to have concerns specifically regarding the relaxing of normal controls shortly before the fiscal year-end for unplanned transfers the government makes to its service delivery partners."

This is taxpayers' money. The McGuinty government spends it in a mad rush, and all we have right now to show for it is that you're telling us to wait six or eight months. We want to know how mad the rush was. If you don't have anything to hide, if the minister doesn't, why don't you make those treasury board orders public right now?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I'm absolutely fascinated by the way in which the leader of the official opposition frames a question to which he already knows the answer, because he has actually spent quite a bit of time here. He knows that all treasury board orders are gazetted. The Ontario Gazette is a public document. Those become available to every member of the House, to every political party, to every citizen. He knows that.

He should know as well that year-end expenditures for 2006-07 represented, in the main, a flow through of federal revenues for public housing and social housing around the province. He also knows, because I read it in my budget, that the year-end spending also provided some \$400 million in infrastructure assistance to colleges and universities. If he wants to go on, I could go through this list all afternoon. I am very proud of those investments.

**Mr. Tory:** What I also know is that the McGuinty government will not publish those treasury board orders

in the Ontario Gazette until months and months from now, well after the election, because they don't want anybody to see these details of how they rushed the taxpayers' money out the door—no controls, no formal process. To quote the Premier, "Just like that"—taxpayers' money.

So if there is nothing to hide, then I ask you this question: Last year, on March 23, you spent \$3.5 million a minute. On March 30, you spent \$1.5 million a minute in those cabinet meetings. The Auditor General said this kind of practice of rushing taxpayers' money out the door should stop, but you didn't stop; you kept doing it. All we're asking is: How big a slushy did you pour yourself with the taxpayers' money? If there's nothing to hide, then we ask the minister to make those treasury board orders public now—not six months or nine months from now—so the people can see what care you did or did not take with their money.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I would just put it back to my friend, the Leader of the Opposition, whether he thinks in those year-end expenditures, and I just want to get the figure correct here, that the \$2 million that went to Bethel House in his riding—he himself asked for his name to be included on the press release because these funds were very much needed for that hospital.

I would just put it to you very simply: The good news is that in the last three months of the last fiscal year, the province saw additional revenues. Most of that went to reduce the deficits that we inherited from them. Some \$1.4 million went to the priorities established by this government, and we're very proud of those expenditures.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. New question, the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** My question is again for the Premier and again it concerns the government's year-end spending practices.

Methinks the minister doth protest a bit too much. We're just asking—by the way, I've never asked once to have my name on any of your press releases; I don't think I would want to. But having said that, we have \$4 billion in year-end spending from this government spread out over two years. The Auditor General, that officer of this Legislature, raised concerns about this last December, and the Premier said in response to that report, "We are implementing every single recommendation of the Auditor General." That's on December 5, and yet a few months later you guys are at it again, blowing money out the door like there's no tomorrow. The Premier confirmed on April 27, when he said the money went "out the door"—no application form, no formal process—"just like that," millions of dollars. If the Premier took proper care and if there's nothing to hide, why won't the Premier make public those treasury board orders now so we can see exactly what he did with the taxpayers' money?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I know the Minister of Finance has provided a great deal of information on this.



The leader of the official opposition would have us believe that we should be providing more co-operation to the Auditor General and that he has a good deal of respect. Yet, when we broadened the powers available to the Auditor General and said that he should be able to look at universities, schools, hospitals and government agencies like children's aid societies, he and his party voted against that very measure. When we said that the Auditor General should have the authority to vet all government advertising, they voted against that particular measure. When we said that the Auditor General should be given the responsibility to review public finances before an election in order to determine whether a government could ever again hide a deficit, they voted against that measure.

Clearly, we're all for ensuring that the Auditor General can do his job—

**The Speaker:** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tory:** I'll simply add to that list: When we on this side of the House—the New Democrats and ourselves—asked 286 questions for the Auditor General to be brought in to examine the spending done in this disgraceful slush fund scandal, it took three weeks for the Premier to finally agree to bring him in.

On December 6, 2006, the Premier said, "We have to be very careful when it comes to how we deal with taxpayer money." He made reference that day to more transparency and accountability. Then, weeks later, we see the slush machine working overtime, with 1.4 billion taxpayer dollars out the door in a mad rush.

The Premier claims this money just fell into his lap. He said that he and his finance minister knew about it just at the last minute, which is an incredible admission of bad management—they knew about \$1 billion in extra money belonging to the taxpayers at the last minute.

I ask again, will the Premier make available to the taxpayers, to the media, to us and to the public the treasury board orders and other orders for this past year so we can see just how mad the rush was to blow taxpayers' money out the door at the last minute?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I think it's important to take a look at some of the year-end expenditures and investments that are now opposed by the leader of the official opposition.

We invested \$670 million in a new subway expansion. We invested \$82 million in Viva transit in York region. We invested \$2.5 million in Durham transit; this is going to benefit the members from Whitby–Ajax, Oshawa and Durham. I would think they would be in support of that particular investment.

We've invested in sports centres as well. Port Colborne, for example, is going to build a new twin-pad hockey arena, pool, track and skate park as the result of a \$3-million investment. I know the member opposite is very much going to support that investment we're making in Port Colborne.

When it comes to Brampton, there's the AcceleRide program. We've invested an additional \$95 million through year-end expenditures.

I think those are important, worthwhile objectives. If the leader of the official opposition is saying he does not support those, then he should stand up and say so.

**Mr. Tory:** What the Leader of the Opposition will stand up and say is this: Surely you don't expect anybody to believe that you just found out about having this extra money, as you call it, from the taxpayers at the last minute. It's an incredible admission of bad management if you really expect anybody to believe that. And surely you don't also expect the taxpayers to believe you just came up with these ideas to support these worthy projects at the end of the year.

The point we're making is this: When it is the taxpayers' money, we believe you have an obligation to spend every cent with as much care, as much responsibility, as much scrutiny and as much accountability as you would any other day of the year, and we don't think that is being done.

All we've asked is that you help us by making available documents that, as the minister says, will be made available in due course anyway, months after the election, to show us just how much care was or was not taken in rushing this money out the door.

Why will the Premier not agree to make those documents available right now? Is there something being hidden here?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I know that Ontarians are entitled to know where the money went, but apparently the leader of the official opposition is unhappy with these kinds of investments.

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Let me list a few more: \$392 million into affordable housing; \$390 million into our colleges and universities; \$35 million into the new Niagara Falls convention centre; \$28 million into the Ottawa Congress Centre; \$50 million into the MaRS Discovery District.

When it comes to fixing connecting links to highways, \$775,000 went into Barrie, \$92,000 went into Renfrew, \$85,000 went into Pembroke, \$941,000 into Durham, \$420,000 into Wellington and \$410,000 into Timmins. Those, once again, I would argue, are eminently worthwhile, are in keeping with the greater public interest and are supported by the people of Ontario. I think the leader of the official opposition should just come out and say that he does not support these kinds of investments on behalf of Ontarians.

#### NORTHERN ECONOMY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. Premier, under your government, Ontario has now lost 175,000 good-paying manufacturing jobs. What has become very clear is that your government is prepared to do virtually nothing in the face of this job loss.

My question is this: Can the Premier tell working families across Ontario why he has done virtually nothing to stop this hemorrhaging of good jobs when it took you only eight days to raise your own pay by \$40,000 a year?



**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** Obviously, I take issue with the entire premise of the leader of the NDP's question. I would argue that no government in the history of this province has been more activist when it comes to helping business, industry and labour cope with the difficult and challenging transition they've got to go through in order to be more productive and more competitive in a globalized economy.

Whether you're talking about our \$500-million investment in the auto sector, which has leveraged \$7 billion and 7,000 new jobs; whether you're talking about the close to \$1 billion that we've invested in the forestry sector to help strengthen that particular part of our economy, which is so important to northern Ontario but especially northwestern Ontario; whether you're talking about the money that we're investing in the agriculture sector—again, close to \$1 billion—we have done much, I would argue, by way of investment in and support for Ontario industry, Ontario workers, Ontario families and Ontario communities.

**Mr. Hampton:** It's amazing that the Premier would mention the forest sector. Everyone in northern Ontario knows that the only thing you've done there is destroy tens of thousands of jobs. But now the McGuinty government has its sights set on another industry. Diamond mining was set to become a major source of jobs and economic activity in northern Ontario, especially for First Nations communities. Once again, the McGuinty government has demonstrated how out of touch it is on this issue by almost tripling the diamond mining royalty and putting the big freeze on that part of the mining industry.

My question is this: Premier, First Nations leaders came here to Queen's Park to ask you to rethink your diamond royalty policy. Are you going to listen to those First Nation leaders?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** Just to remind my friend that this Premier has not only visited the mine but visited with those First Nations communities.

This is the first time I have ever heard a leader of the NDP or anyone from the NDP argue against a fair level of taxation for resources that are coming out of this soil. The mining royalty represents a fair royalty on net profits that arise from the new mine in the north of this province.

He should know that the royalty that applies is the very same royalty that applies to all diamond mining in Canada, notably those mines across the northern part of this country in the territories—one royalty which applies to diamond mining wherever it takes place in Canada.

**Mr. Hampton:** The Minister of Finance leaves out the fact that there's only one other jurisdiction in Canada that has a diamond mine: the Northwest Territories.

But that is beside the issue. The First Nations leadership that came here represents some of the lowest-income communities in this province. Attawapiskat First Nation is one of those. It has a sky-high unemployment rate. In many cases, three and four families are living in three-

bedroom bungalows because they can't afford housing. Yes, the Premier was very happy to go have his picture taken at the mine and in the community and then come back to Toronto and say, "Now we're going to triple the mining rate." It's the First Nations leadership. De Beers can look after itself. These are some of the lowest-income communities in the province, and they say you're taking their economic future away from them. Are you going to listen to them or are you going to take their economic future away? Which is it?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I'm surprised and disappointed at the outrageous scaremongering tactics of my friend the leader of the NDP, as if somehow this royalty, which is a fair royalty applied anywhere in Canada, will somehow reduce new employment opportunities for aboriginal peoples in the north. In fact, the revenue that we raise from this royalty is the revenue that we are reinvesting in the northern part of the province and with those communities. In addition—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The member for Timmins-James Bay.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Member for Timmins-James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** Go visit those communities.

**The Speaker:** I will not warn the member for Timmins-James Bay again. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I know that De Beers, a very successful international mining company that mines diamonds all over the world, has lobbied just about everyone they can to get a lower tax rate. I just want to say publicly in this House that we have committed to De Beers that in this royalty, which is a royalty on net profit, to the extent that they are investing in aboriginal communities, the royalty will be less and be reduced and support—

**The Speaker:** New question.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** I name the member for Timmins-James Bay, Mr. Bisson.

*Mr. Bisson was escorted from the chamber.*

**The Speaker:** New question. The leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** My question is to the Premier, because the Premier was only too happy to go to Attawapiskat First Nation and to go to this mine. What the First Nations are saying is this: They have an impact benefit agreement negotiated with De Beers. The First Nation's concern is that now that you've come in and tripled the mining royalty, you're going to deprive the First Nation of some of the revenue that they would have gotten through their impact benefit agreement. I want to ask the Premier this: Do you think it's fair that you should be taking money away from some of the lowest-income



First Nations people in Ontario in order to make your own pocketbook look better?

1450

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Let me just explain once again to my friend that the royalty on diamond mining in Ontario represents a royalty on net profit. As the net profit of De Beers grows, the royalty will grow from about 6% to 13%. It is a net profit royalty. We are now, as I said earlier, negotiating with De Beers to determine what can be deducted as an expense. And I'll tell my friends once again, including my friend from Timmins—James Bay, who has just left us, that part of that discussion involves specific investments by De Beers in the native community, which will be an expense that can be deducted from profit and therefore reduce the ultimate level of the royalty.

**Mr. Hampton:** The Premier and his Minister of Finance can talk all about their backroom discussions with De Beers. This is about the First Nations: First Nations that have a terrible situation with youth suicide; First Nations that have unbelievable unemployment rates; First Nations where people are looking for a future. And for the first time, they were saying, "Some of our people have an opportunity to get a job. Some of us have an opportunity to start a business." What they see is the McGuinty government coming in and scooping up the revenue, which has a direct and an indirect impact on them. I'm simply saying that you can tell the media all you want about your discussions with De Beers. What about the aboriginal people, the First Nations people, who wanted a job and wanted a future, and see that you're taking that away from them? What about them?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** The diamonds in the north part of this province belong to the people of this province, including those communities that my friend thinks he's arguing on behalf of. There's no doubt that De Beers—a very successful international company—would like to have a much lower tax rate, but there's an interest in those resources that belongs to all the people of this province. I want to tell my friend that the way in which those native communities, who are going to benefit tremendously from this initiative, are being used to further the interests of De Beers gives me great disappointment, and I am sorry to see the leader of the third party participate in it.

**Mr. Hampton:** We've heard a lot of hot air from the finance minister. I want to quote some of those First Nation leaders. Mushkegowuk Grand Chief Stan Louttit: "Northern Ontario generally is benefiting from this mine. We need to continue doing that. This tax hike jeopardizes future development. What's going to happen...? Are we going to continue wallowing in Third World conditions...?" Or the chief of Attawapiskat, Mike Carpenter: "We weren't aware of this. We were never consulted, so it came as a surprise to us. We've already negotiated an impact benefit agreement with De Beers. We don't know how this tax hike is going to affect us." This is not De Beers speaking; these are First Nation leaders speaking,

First Nations who are struggling with 85% and 90% unemployment rates.

My question to the Premier: You are happy, Premier, to go to the First Nations and smile for the cameras. Are you now going to listen to these First Nation leaders and their plight for jobs and a chance at economic activity?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I'm aware of the fact that the owners of this company have made some suggestions that it is going to be First Nations communities that are going to suffer as a result of this tax, and I regret that, because it is not true.

Three things you need to know, sir: First of all, this level of taxation is the same royalty rate as applies to the other major diamond mines in Canada in the Northwest Territories. Second, you need to know that 13 million people in Ontario have an ownership interest in those diamonds. The third thing you need to know is that our negotiations with De Beers are designed to ensure that the benefit of that mine is shared most particularly with the aboriginal communities in that part of the province. In all three areas, we are going to be successful.

#### IMMIGRANT SERVICES

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and it does not refer to the year-end slush fund. In defending his indefensible actions relating to the trust fund, though, the minister repeatedly referred to two agreements signed in 2005, the Ontario-Canada labour market agreement and the Ontario-Canada immigration agreement, under which some \$300 million was transferred from the federal government to the provincial government to provide very specific services, many of which the minister was responsible for delivering. I would like to know from the minister if in fact RFPs were issued for the provision of those services that he oversaw, and I would like him to clarify if he would table those RFPs with the House.

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I think the member doesn't understand the basic premise of the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement. The basic premise is that, rather than the federal money flowing into the treasury of Ontario and then providing services, the agreement specifically says that the federal programs that are already in place will be enhanced so that the money goes directly into expanding programs and services that for 20 years Ontario newcomers were being shortchanged on. So the money flows directly to the service providers and the programs that the federal government is already running and expanding in Ontario.

**Mr. Klees:** Perhaps the minister should read the agreement that he himself signed in November 2005, because that agreement makes very specific references to the services that the province is responsible for delivering, and section 7.2, which is headed "Accountability," if the minister has not read it, refers specifically to two things that the minister has responsibility to do: one is to share information on program investments and results with respect to the respective settlement and language



programs on a fiscal-year basis; and second, that that information be made public as to accountability and reporting.

What I will ask the minister to do now is to tell us whether he has complied with section 7.2 of the agreement that he wrote—and if he has, where is the tabling of that report?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** This is incredible coming from that member, who sat in this chamber as a minister for nine years and never once raised the issue of the shortchanging of newcomers in Ontario—never raised it once. I ask him to stand up on his feet and tell me one time that he raised the fact that Ontario newcomers were being shortchanged and tell me what his government did to ensure that shortchanging had to end. We're proud that we stood up for newcomers and got the resources in Ontario. They never even mentioned it once when they were in government.

### ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURIES

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** My question is to the Minister of Health. Adam Crabtree of Hamilton has an acquired brain injury. After receiving three months of hospital treatment, Adam was discharged from Chedoke's acquired brain injury program. On April 17, he was transferred to St. Joseph's Villa, a long-term-care home in Hamilton. Adam is 20 years old. Minister, do you think it's appropriate for 20-year-old Adam to be placed in a long-term-care home?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I know that the matter at hand is one that the local community care access centre and the local health integration network have been involved in, in helping to ensure that the individual receives a good deal of quality care. There are numerous younger people across the province of Ontario who are finding that the level of care offered in a long-term-care home is the appropriate one. I have one of these individuals in my family, from the member for Lanark-Carleton's riding—if I've got the riding right—and I can attest to a very high quality of care for that individual, who similarly is of a very young age. But if the honourable member has more that she would like to inquire about with respect to the nature of the care that's being provided, I'd be very happy to follow up.

1500

**Ms. Martel:** Adam's in a long-term-care home because there were no community services for him, and he's not the only one in that position. Ken Vandelight has an acquired brain injury. He's been at the Elizabeth Centre long-term-care home in Val Caron in my riding since October 2006. He's 27. After three months in Chedoke's ABI program, Travis Bailey of Hamilton was also destined for a long-term-care home, but his parents intervened. He lives at home with his parents but without all of the brain injury services that he needs. He is 23.

The Ontario Brain Injury Association says this is a major crisis that your ministry has been aware of since 2005; that 449 brain injury survivors are waiting up to 14

years for proper ABI services. Minister, what are you going to do today for young people like Adam, Ken and Travis so they're not forced into a long-term-care home?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** First off is to acknowledge that from time to time, the level of care that is appropriate will be found for our residents' long-term care. And I do say that I believe, based on what I've seen, that for some this is appropriate. Of course, we depend on clinicians to be able to give the appropriate advice.

I can tell the honourable member that, standing in very sharp contrast to the record she performed while her party was in office, we've made very substantial increases in the resources available to support people with ABI. As people continue to acquire brain injuries, one would assume of course that it's necessary to continue to make funding enhancements to support more people in the community, and I would be very happy to look into these particular cases that the honourable member brings forward.

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce):** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Since day one, this government has been committed to bringing more clean and renewable power on line than any government before us. We understand the importance of giving Ontario homes and businesses the power they need when they need it without compromising the environment.

While we have been clear when it comes to the need to combat climate change and smog, it's unfortunate that the member from Kenora-Rainy River hasn't. Even Jack Gibbons of the Ontario Clean Air Alliance says, "We're surprised that Hampton hasn't taken a very strong leadership role on climate change and the coal phase-out." When asked about the NDP's position on coal, Mark Winfield of the Pembina Institute says, "There are moments when that could be clearer."

Minister, can you reassure this House that the government will remain steadfast in its commitment to closing our coal plants and bring more clean and renewable energy on line to ensure that Ontario has the sustainable energy—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question's been asked. Minister?

*Laughter.*

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy):** The members of the third party laugh, but when they're in northern Ontario, they say, "Keep the coal plants open," and when they're in southern Ontario, they say "Close the coal plants." The Pembina Institute and the Ontario Clean Air Alliance have all said what's abundantly clear, and that is that the NDP is anything but clear on climate change.

Emissions are down 32% in our coal plants, even though the New Democrats opposed those measures. I'd also remind my colleague who asked the question that it was the New Democrats who cancelled the Conawapa project, which would have brought clean, green, renewable hydroelectric power—



**The Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mrs. Mitchell:** Minister, I can't stress the importance of our commitment—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. I need to be able to hear the member for Huron-Bruce.

**Mrs. Mitchell:** Minister, I can't stress the importance of our commitment to clean, renewable, affordable and reliable power enough. We must also be committed to conservation. It must play a key role in keeping our energy system affordable and reliable.

It was a proud day when the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act was given royal assent, the first of its kind in Canada. It was unfortunate, however, that the NDP, including the member from Kenora-Rainy River, voted against it.

Through conservation, we can all work to reduce peak demand during the winter and summer months, and we should be exploring every opportunity to do it. While the NDP chooses to play politics with conservation, this government owes it to Ontarians to move forward aggressively on conservation. Minister, what is our government doing to ensure that Ontarians have the tools they need to help Ontario build a culture of conservation?

*Laughter.*

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** Again the NDP laugh about this.

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** Yes, they are; they're laughing.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** They're laughing. Let's just look at the record. This summer, five new province-wide conservation programs will come online that every Ontario resident can participate in. Let's compare that to what happened in the 1990s during the government that Mr. Hampton was part of.

Power saver month, which encouraged customers to purchase more energy-efficient products at local retailers with reduced prices, was cancelled. The refrigerator cashback program, which we are putting back into place province-wide this summer—the New Democrats cancelled it. Energy-efficient lighting, incentives for renovation retrofit—was it the Tories that cancelled that? No, it was the New Democrats. They try to be all things to all people. They've got no record—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

#### IMMIGRANT SERVICES

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** To the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration: I'm not sure that the minister fully understands the agreement that he signed on November 21, 2005. I have it here, and I can deliver it to him if he likes. But it does make very specific reference to funding that is transferred from the federal government to the Ontario government. It specifically speaks to the kinds of services that are to be delivered, and it talks about settlement services, language training, immigrant and labour market integration—the same kinds of services the minister has been telling us he has been providing.

My question is very straightforward: In funding the agencies that are delivering these services, has he issued RFPs so that we know the services that are being provided are being done so in the most efficient and cost-effective way?

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I think the member from Oak Ridges is confused. Let me tell him again. The programs that have been provided by the federal government for a number of years were programs that were underfunded. The immigrant who came to Ontario was getting \$800, on average, from the federal government—programs like LINC for languages or ISAP for settlement services or host programs. These programs were underfunded because if an immigrant went to Quebec, they would get about \$3,400 to \$3,800. So when the agreement was signed, it meant that the Ontario programs would start to reach those Quebec levels. They're finally doing that. They're slow—maybe that's what the member should be talking about—because the government in Ottawa isn't funding as fast as it said it would in the agreement. Maybe that's what he should be raising rather than the fact that the Ontario taxpayers have been funding this for years by themselves.

**Mr. Klees:** I would then like to redirect the minister's attention to the agreement that he signed under section 7.2, which speaks about accountability. Under that section, he is required as the minister to file annually a report that deals with the services being provided and the accountability issues. If he's saying it's slow, we all need to know about that.

My question to the minister is very straightforward: Has he filed, as required, his annual accountability report under the terms of this agreement, and if so, where is it?

1510

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** Again, this just demonstrates how out of touch that member has been. We said emphatically to the previous Liberal government, we've said it to this government, that that agreement had to be signed quickly because the underservicing was doing great damage to our newcomer communities. We finally signed the agreement, and that money started to flow into the programs. We in Ontario have been doing this by ourselves for too long. We provide our own ESL programs, \$50 million a year; we provide great programs for internationally trained doctors; we provide bridge training programs for nurses and dietitians. We've been doing this by ourselves.

Now the member stands up and says, "Who's accounting?" He should be asking for the accounting of the feds—the past government or this government: Why hasn't the money ever been invested here? At least we're thankful we're finally seeing the money where it should be in Ontario. Thank God for that.

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, in the Halton area, parents and educators are forced to raise



money from the community to purchase reading materials for students with special needs. It seems to me that the minister has subcontracted her responsibilities to parents by forcing them to raise funds for school essentials. The question is this: Does the minister find it acceptable that parents and teachers raise funds to purchase reading materials for students with special needs?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** It's very interesting that the party opposite has not once acknowledged that the funding that has gone into the publicly funded education system under this government is beyond imagining, given what the previous government did: \$2 billion out of education; \$3.5 billion into education in the province.

As I have said previously in this House, the issue of fundraising is one that I take very seriously. I understand that it's an issue that we have to pay attention to. Fundraising is much more than just the dollars and cents that communities raise for projects. It is about community cohesion. It is about community-building. It's something that has been around for a very, very long time—under that member's watch as a school trustee as well. It is the responsibility of school boards to make sure that resources are allocated equitably. We've put more money into education to deal with the basics.

**Mr. Marchese:** The minister is absolutely right: The lack of funding is beyond imagining. Minister, ponder the following: In Huron—Bruce, parents have to fundraise to buy math books. In Hamilton, Ancaster High School is forced to fundraise to purchase computers and technical equipment. St. Sofia school in Mississauga raises funds to purchase books and gym equipment.

The minister may find this question oversimplified, but parents demand a simple answer. Does the minister believe it is okay for parents to be forced to raise funds for math books, computers and gym equipment?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** Does the member opposite believe that it was appropriate, when he was in office in 1991, for people in Toronto to be raising money for computers? The member opposite—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. We're wasting time. Order.

Minister?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** The member opposite claims that there has been no money for the things that parents are fundraising for. In fact, we have put in \$32 million for school libraries. That's \$6,600 for every school library. There are 7,600 new support staff under this government, including librarians, including library technicians. The member opposite has claimed publicly that there's only \$25 million that has been spent on repairs in our schools. That is ridiculous. Boards have had access to \$4 billion under Good Places to Learn.

The member opposite finds it impossible to look at what's happening in publicly funded education and understand that we are rebuilding where the previous government tore down. He should be supporting us at every step of the way if he believes in publicly funded education.

## ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

**Mr. Bill Mauro (Thunder Bay—Atikokan):** My question is for the Minister of Education. When we announced more changes to the funding formula, specifically the First Nations, Metis and Inuit education supplement, the leader of the third party stood in his place and said, "The McGuinty government boasts that it is going to provide \$177,000 in funding for aboriginal education for the Lakehead District School Board this year. However, when you look at the big numbers, the ... board is now receiving ... less ... funding from the government as compared to two years ago."

This is the same leader whose party ignores the fact that we have made an additional investment of \$3.5 billion in our public schools, won't mention the fact that class sizes increased under his party's mandate, won't bring up the fact that the NDP promised to increase provincial funding of education but didn't, and won't talk about the social contract or how they legislated striking teachers back to work three times.

Minister, can you please clarify for my constituents and this House the investments we've made in this particular board?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** What the member for Kenora—Rainy River should have said is that it's about time an Ontario government stood up to the challenge of funding education for aboriginal students in our provincially funded schools. In the Lakehead District School Board, there are almost 3,000 fewer students than in 2003. That's a 23% decrease in students. But even with declining enrolment, even in the face of declining enrolment, we have invested in the Lakehead District School Board. We put \$3.1 million more into the Lakehead District School Board. That's \$68,000 per school, a 33% increase over what the board had. So in the face of declining enrolment, we've recognized that the board needs support. They've got bricks and mortar and residual costs, and we have invested in them. We're increasing funding so that boards across the province, including in Kenora—Rainy River, can run their schools.

**Mr. Mauro:** Minister, I'm certain that my constituents now understand the connection between our investments in publicly funded education and the results of those investments, like smaller class sizes and higher test scores.

I understand that in our continued refinements and changes to the funding formula, we introduced the First Nations, Metis and Inuit education supplement. This grant is extremely beneficial to northern Ontario schools, as many of our First Nations, Metis and Inuit reside in the north. It is also a change to the formula that the leader of the third party dismisses as "tinkering around the edges" of the funding formula.

Minister, can you please inform this House as to why this is an important change and how it will benefit our students in the north?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** I don't think we can overstate the importance of this new grant to aboriginal students across



the province. It's really shocking to me that the members opposite would take that tack.

I want to quote from the Daily Miner and News, which stated, "Pride streamed across the faces of Keewatin-Patricia District School Board members and administration April 10 upon reporting their hard work in a province-wide initiative." It's that pride that was confronting us when we introduced this new grant.

The advocate for the province-wide initiative was none other than Ms. Janet Wilkinson, the director of education for the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board. She has been advocating for this exact change. In fact, here's what she said: "I am so proud of what this government has done by acknowledging for the first time that education for aboriginal students has to be recognized. There is recognition for the first time in the funding model for aboriginal students, and the projects being supported will generate new approaches to ensuring aboriginal students have equal opportunity."

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr. John Yakubuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** My question is for the Minister of Energy. Energy stakeholders, business leaders and citizens across this province are expressing grave concern that we won't have an adequate supply of energy this summer. They tell me that last year you caught a break. It was a much cooler summer, and we had adequate rainfall. But with forecasters calling for a hot, dry summer this year, and very little in the way of spring freshet, and your failure to bring new, adequate supply online, our supply is tenuous. Can the minister assure this House and the people of Ontario that as a result of his mismanagement, we won't see rolling blackouts this summer in the province?

1520

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy):** This is a very serious matter that this government has taken a number of steps on. I would point out that the Independent Electricity System Operator's report projects our ability to meet our power needs this summer as being very good, something that did not happen when the member opposite's party was in. In addition, the IESO will be releasing a further report in June. We are now in the process of making sure all routine maintenance on our various nuclear reactors, coal plants and so on is being looked after.

That does not preclude that we could run into trouble this summer in the event of some kind of unanticipated situation. It's a serious matter. I remind the member opposite that last summer, everyone had the same blessings. Alberta, California and New York had voltage reductions; Ontario did not. And last year, for the first time in almost a generation, Ontario was a net exporter of power.

**Mr. Yakubuski:** Minister, as they say to me, we're one bad break away from a blackout. I would like to bring to your attention—which the minister has not let the House know—the delays with regard to the Sithe

Goreway project in Brampton, which you guaranteed would be online and offering interim power this summer. We now know that that project has been further delayed and will not be available this summer. That's 875 megawatts. From time to time we hear an announcement here and an announcement there about a megawatt there or a megawatt there, or 10 megawatts here, all going long into the future. But you assured us last year that this project would be online to supply the needs of the western GTA. We know now that it won't be online. Minister, what have you got as a contingency when your plan is shown to have failed?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** Actually, in terms of the IESO's planning forecast, they didn't take that plant into consideration, so the 3,300 megawatts that's online doesn't include that.

I will agree with the member on one statement: We are one bad break away from a problem, and that's another Tory government. That's the bad break that could happen. Under that member's watch, this province lost a net equivalent of 1,800 megawatts of power. That's the equivalent of Niagara Falls running dry. And all the while they had secret slush funds for former Tory staffers, \$400,000—it's like a rogue's gallery of old Tories: Paul Rhodes, for one. A whole bunch of them all got money. They hid it from public view. They wanted to privatize the sector—and in fact the member is right; it was Sithe Goreway that agreed to have power online this summer, and it's they who haven't met their undertaking, not the government. This government has set back on track the power system that that party single-handedly destroyed in just eight short years.

### CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** My question is for the Minister of Government Services. The most vulnerable in our community, including those on your \$8 minimum wage and low-income families, are barely getting by and have limited access to reasonable financial services. They find themselves as repeat customers of payday loan sharks who charge criminal rates. The CBC cited one woman whose \$500 loan took five years to retire, paying an additional \$9,500 in interest and other fees.

With federal Bill C-26, Ontario now has the capacity to regulate the industry. The bill I've introduced actually sets an interest rate limit of 35%, to end the criminal rates that you would rather see just advertised with posters on the windows of loan sharks. Minister, will you stop these payday loan companies and support my bill to license and cap interest rates at 35%?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** The member, I think, should know that we advocated the right move, which was that the federal government should have been responsible for regulating this industry. The consumer groups advocated that as well, as you know.

It was, I guess, two weeks ago that the federal government passed legislation saying they're not going to do



that. What we then did was to move—and we're the first province to do this—to ensure that the consumer at least knows exactly what is happening in terms of interest rates. The second thing we did was, we're now asking for advice on how we should proceed going forward with payday lending. I look forward to that advice. I've yet to see the member's bill, but I look forward to seeing the bill. Over the next few weeks we will be getting input from the public on exactly how, long-term, we should be responding to payday loans. But, as I said, I would have preferred that the federal government act; they didn't, and we're moving forward now.

**Ms. DiNovo:** My question is to the minister. Discussion papers, reports, Ernst and Young, ACORN, Statistics Canada and the financial industry have already given you all the information you know. You've been doing nothing since your government first brought up the issue in 2005. Carol Goar said it best in the *Toronto Star*. She said, "1,000% interest 1,000% wrong." When will you actually work to do something to stop this criminal gouging of our most vulnerable citizens? When will you work to cap the interest rates, as Quebec has done and as other provinces have moved to do, at 35%?

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** Again, I'm looking forward to the public having some input in this. I would just say to the member that one of the challenges is that there is competing advice. I have, from the NDP, Mr. Kormos's private member's bill, which is very different than your private member's bill and proposes a very different approach. So you can appreciate that as we are getting advice, we do have competing advice. Until today, I had Mr. Kormos's bill, which took a different approach than your bill. But I look forward to examining your bill, his bill and other advice even though they may conflict with each other, and we will go forward in a way that represents the best possible interest for the public.

## FOREST FIREFIGHTING

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. We're all familiar with the challenges that the MNR is facing with the current forest fire situation. I note that last week the member for Kenora–Rainy River wrote a letter about the forest fire situation. This letter was nothing more than fear-mongering. I quote: "Given the serious understaffing that exists in MNR district and area offices across the north, how does the McGuinty government plan to protect northern Ontario forests, industries and communities from potentially devastating forest fires this season?"

Minister, can you please explain to this House the current forest fire situation and, more importantly, why the comments made by the leader of the third party are so irresponsible and nothing more than the politics of fear?

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I was very disturbed by the fearmongering that was put on by the leader of the third party last week. We've got a very challenging fire season ahead. But as a former Minister of

Natural Resources, the leader of the third party should understand that there's a limited capacity when it comes to firefighting in the province of Ontario. We have 700 firefighters who are actively going there, and 160 of them are on standby. We have already responses in with our agreements from BC and Wisconsin, from Alberta and the Northwest Territories. We're on top of this. It's a challenging year, but we've got the capacity to do it.

**Ms. Smith:** Thank you, Minister, for those assurances for the people of northern Ontario and all of Ontario. The leader of the third party's fearmongering tactics are not acceptable. His letter went on to state that "as a result of repeated cutbacks by the McGuinty government, MNR district and area offices are severely understaffed and under-resourced across northern Ontario."

Today in this House the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka also chimed in with his point of view. I want to point out to you that within this House there are members of former governments and former ministers who, when given the chance to show leadership on these issues, chose reckless cuts over making investments and protecting our resources for future generations.

I have seen first-hand that the McGuinty government is taking action and that we've made some headway in correcting these problems. Can you share with this House the measures our government has taken to improve your ministry?

1530

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** Over the term of our office, we have increased the budget of the Ministry of Natural Resources by 23%, 6.45% this year alone. That's an extra \$44 million we've got to put into capacity, unlike the leader of the third party, who cut \$144 million from the MNR budget when he was minister. So we're acting here, we're building up the ministry, unlike that member, who cut down the MNR years ago.

## VISITORS

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: One of the great, great chief justices, really, in the history of the Commonwealth, a great Canadian, our former Chief Justice of the Superior Court, the Honourable Patrick LeSage, is in the members' gallery.

We're having a vote today on Bill 103. Without the Honourable Patrick LeSage, Bill 103 would never have happened. I know all members of this House and the public owe the Honourable Patrick LeSage a great debt of gratitude. We thank you, sir.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** Another quick point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to welcome the students of Rick Hansen Secondary School and their teacher Angelo Kontos to this question period.

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I recognize my colleague from Trinity–Spadina in trumping my point of order to say to the gang that I hope you enjoyed the show.



**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would just like to remind the members that the OLIP reception is today. All of the people who have worked here so very hard this year—our interns—would like to see you very much. Show up at 5:30. I hope all members can attend.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to remind the members as well that there will be a reception in the Legislature for the independent insurance brokers of Ontario, of which I was a member for three short years, and I'm pleased now that I'm here rather than there.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** That is not a point of order. It is time for petitions.

## PETITIONS

### MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION OFFICE

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln):** I present a petition about reopening the Grimsby MTO office. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Grimsby is a growing community with an increasing demand for government services; and

"Whereas people want and deserve to have a real person providing friendly and knowledgeable assistance to citizens rather than a computer terminal; and

"Whereas the Dalton McGuinty government doubled fees for drivers' licences, meaning Grimsby residents are paying more but could be receiving less in services;

"We, the undersigned, request as follows:

"That the McGuinty government immediately seek to find a permanent operator for the Grimsby MTO office to provide in-person, friendly customer service to the people of Grimsby; and

"Furthermore, that the McGuinty government should accelerate this process and reopen the MTO office without any further delay."

Beneath the signatures of Lynn and Hilbert Vanderplaat, I assign my signature.

### DISABLED PERSONS PARKING PERMIT PROGRAM

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I'm presenting a petition to the Legislature of Ontario on behalf of the member for Algoma–Manitoulin.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there currently exist problems of exposure to theft and the weather when displaying a disabled person parking permit on a motorcycle while parked in a disabled parking space;

"We, the undersigned, petition our members of Parliament to promote the development of a special, fixed permit as proposed by the Bikers Rights Organization,

for use by disabled persons who ride or are passengers on motorcycles, even if that requires an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act."

I put my signature to this petition as well.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** These petitions are titled Rural Ontario Needs Transit Support Too. There are 1,075 names from the Dunnville area, gathered by Dianne Scott from Dunnville.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas public transit services in the communities of Haldimand and Norfolk counties have declined to the point of virtual nonexistence;

"Whereas people in these communities require bus service just as much as those in urban areas to access medical services, get to appointments at nearby towns and visit family;

"Whereas communities in Haldimand and Norfolk counties have received no substantial money to support any form of public transit from the provincial government;

"Whereas the McGuinty government has allocated a two-cents-a-litre gas tax initiative to support public transportation in urban areas of the province; and

"Whereas despite paying into the province's two-cents-a-litre gas tax initiative, residents of rural municipalities like Haldimand and Norfolk counties are effectively shut out of this growing source of cash support for transit;

"We, the undersigned, ask the Ontario government to investigate the establishment of connecting public transit links between Haldimand county and Norfolk county communities and outlying municipalities, as well as to establish a mechanism to ensure rural municipalities receive the full benefit of the gas tax transit initiative."

I agree with these sentiments, and I affix my signature to these petitions.

## SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDING

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly, and I'd like to thank Catholic Family Services of Peel for having sent it in. It's entitled Fairness for Families in the 905 Belt. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the population of the Greater Toronto region will increase by an estimated four million more people in the next generation, with the bulk of that growth coming in the 905 belt of fast-growing cities located north, east and west of Metro Toronto; and

"Whereas these cities are already large and dynamic population units, with big-city issues and big-city needs, requiring big-city resources to implement big-city solutions to social issues and human services needs;

"Whereas the 2007-08 Ontario budget proposes aggressive and badly needed increases in operating funding to build and strengthen capacity in develop-

mental and social services agencies and to invest in helping the young, the weak, the needy and the vulnerable; and

"Whereas the social and human services sectors in the 905 belt have historically received per capita funding far below that of other regions despite facing far greater growth in the populations they serve, and this per capita funding gap has increased in the last four years;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the 2007-08 Ontario budget implementing measures to strengthen Ontario's families be passed without delay, and that the first priority for the allocation of new funding in meeting the government of Ontario's commitment to fairness for families flow to the social services agencies serving cities within the 905 belt, and that funding for programs to serve the 905 belt be allocated to established or growing agencies located within the 905 belt."

I think this perfectly encapsulates a very commonly held sentiment in the 905 belt, and I'll ask page Sridaya to carry it.

#### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** "Petition to the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

#### DISABLED PERSONS PARKING PERMIT PROGRAM

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** On behalf of the member from Manitoulin.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there currently exist problems of exposure to theft and the weather when displaying a disabled person parking permit on a motorcycle while parked in a disabled parking space;

"We, the undersigned, petition our members of Parliament to promote the development of a special, fixed permit as proposed by the Bikers Rights Organization, for use by disabled persons who ride or are passengers on

motorcycles, even if that requires an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act."

I sign my name to this petition in support of such an action.

1540

#### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I support this petition and affix my name to it, and send it down with page Doug.

#### DISABLED PERSONS PARKING PERMIT PROGRAM

**Mr. Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** I'm presenting this petition on behalf of the member for Algoma-Manitoulin.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there currently exist problems of exposure to theft and the weather when displaying a disabled person parking permit on a motorcycle while parked in a disabled parking space;

"We, the undersigned, petition our members of Parliament to promote the development of a special, fixed permit as proposed by the Bikers Rights Organization, for use by disabled persons who ride or are passengers on motorcycles, even if that requires an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act."

I'm pleased to add my signature to this petition.

#### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):** I'm very pleased to rise today and present a petition to the Legislature which reads as follows:

"Whereas the price of gas is reaching historic price levels; and

"Whereas provincial and federal governments have done nothing to protect consumers from high gas prices; and



"Whereas provincial tax on gas is 14 cents per litre and federal tax is 10 cents per litre, plus 6% GST; and

"Whereas these taxes have a detrimental impact on the economy and are unfair to commuters who rely on vehicles to travel to work; and

"Whereas the province has the power to set the price of gas and has taken responsibility for energy prices in other areas, such as hydro and natural gas; and

"Whereas we call on the province to remove the 14.7-cents-per-litre gas tax and on the federal government to eliminate the 10-cent gas tax, plus 6% GST, which amounts to 30% or more;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and urge the Premier to take action and to also persuade the federal government to remove its gas taxes."

I support the petition and affix my signature.

### PARENTING EDUCATION

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads:

"Whereas effective parenting practices do not come instinctively and parenting is our most crucial social role, parenting and human development courses need to be taught to all secondary school students. Parenting education will: reduce teen pregnancies; reduce the rate of costly fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and increase the number of healthy pregnancies; reduce the number of costly social problems related to ineffective parenting practices; and improve the 'social fabric' of Ontario to create a more civil society. Parenting education for students is considered to be socially valuable by a majority of adults of voting age and should be included as a mandatory credit course within the Ontario curriculum;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the requirements for the Ontario secondary school diploma to include one senior-level ... credit course in parenting education ... as a compulsory credit."

I agree with the petition and will affix my signature thereto, and pass it to Julie.

### ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) is a registered charity and private police force autonomously enforcing federal, provincial and municipal animal laws under the provincial animal act without any type of provincial oversight or accountability mechanism in place; and

"Whereas, in 2006, resigned OSPCA director and treasurer Garnet Lasby stated, 'Government, not the

humane society, should be in charge of enforcing laws to protect animals and to prosecute offenders'; and

"Whereas, in 1989, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) formally requested the province step in to remove police powers from the OSPCA; and

"Whereas, in 2006, the Ontario Farm Animal Council (OFAC) stated, 'The number of questions and complaints from the farm community about specific cases and the current enforcement system continues to increase'; and

"Whereas the Animal Care Review Board, a tribunal staffed by volunteers, is the only OSPCA appeals mechanism available outside the court system; and

"Whereas the OSPCA recently received \$1.8 million from the province and is lobbying for additional long-term stable funding;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to ensure that members of the Animal Care Review Board tribunal are adequately trained in accepted provincial livestock practices and have some legal training to rule competently on issues brought before them;

"(2) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to 'investigate the resignation of 29 OSPCA directors (including the chair and the treasurer) who in May 2006 urged 'the province to step in and investigate insane abuse and animal cruelty charges'; and

"(3) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to appoint an ombudsman to investigate allegations of abuses of police powers against the OSPCA."

I present this petition on behalf of many concerned citizens who have signed it from my constituency.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** I have a petition from the people of Pendleton and Curran.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we, the concerned citizens of Pendleton, oppose construction of an ethanol plant/biodigester 500 metres from the village;

"Whereas concerns about ecological disasters with the usage of two pipelines five kilometres each, containing manure, commercial greases and fats piped over two waterways and then to be spread over the lands;

"Whereas water consumption and protection when utilizing approximately 16 million litres per year, elevated nitrate levels and land erosion;

"Whereas health and safety concerns, putting a slow-burning gas tank (biodigester) right beside a highly explosive tank (ethanol plant), non-existent fire resources in case of such disaster, adverse effects of gases permeating the air downwind to the village;

"Whereas economic development concerns for our three campgrounds, golf course, restaurant, recreational trail;

"Whereas social development concerns for our two churches and school affiliation to Pope John Paul II;

"Whereas increased financial concerns, as we will all need a water filtration system....

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the provincial government introduce legislation requiring that all construction of mega hog operations, biodigesters and ethanol plants be restricted to a proximity of a minimum of three kilometres of any village."

I do support this petition.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### INDEPENDENT POLICE REVIEW ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR L'EXAMEN INDÉPENDANT DE LA POLICE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 10, 2007, on the motion for third reading of Bill 103, An Act to establish an Independent Police Review Director and create a new public complaints process by amending the Police Services Act / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à créer le poste de directeur indépendant d'examen de la police et à créer une nouvelle procédure de traitement des plaintes du public en modifiant la Loi sur les services policiers.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 14, 2007, I am now required to put the question.

On April 3, 2007, Mr. Zimmer moved third reading of Bill 103, An Act to establish an Independent Police Review Director and create a new public complaints process by amending the Police Services Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1549 to 1559.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be counted by the table.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Hoy, Pat
Balkissoon, Bas	Hudak, Tim
Barrett, Toby	Jeffrey, Linda
Bentley, Christopher	Klees, Frank
Bradley, James J.	Kormos, Peter
Broten, Laurel C.	Kular, Kuldeep
Brownell, Jim	Kwinter, Monte
Bryant, Michael	Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Caplan, David	Levac, Dave
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	MacLeod, Lisa
Chan, Michael	Marchese, Rosario

Peters, Steve
Phillips, Gerry
Prue, Michael
Qaadri, Shafiq
Racco, Mario G.
Ramal, Khalil
Ramsay, David
Rinaldi, Lou
Runciman, Robert W.
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz

Chudleigh, Ted
Crozier, Bruce
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Di Cocco, Caroline
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duncan, Dwight
Dunlop, Garfield
Elliott, Christine
Ferreira, Paul
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Fonseca, Peter
Gerretsen, John
Hardeman, Ernie

Martel, Shelley
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine
Miller, Norm
Milloy, John
Mitchell, Carol
Mossop, Jennifer F.
Munro, Julia
O'Toole, John
Oraziotti, David
Parsons, Ernie
Patten, Richard

Scott, Laurie
Sergio, Mario
Smith, Monique
Smitherman, George
Sorbara, Gregory S.
Sterling, Norman W.
Tascóna, Joseph N.
Tory, John
Van Bommel, Maria
Wilkinson, John
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Yakabuski, John
Zimmer, David

**The Deputy Speaker:** I'm required to ask if anyone's opposed to the motion.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 74; the nays are 0.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

### LONG-TERM CARE HOMES ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR LES FOYERS DE SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 29, 2007, on the motion for third reading of Bill 140, An Act respecting long-term care homes / Projet de loi 140, Loi concernant les foyers de soins de longue durée.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** When the House last debated Bill 140 at third reading, the member for Nickel Belt had the floor. I'm pleased to recognize the member for Nickel Belt.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** Speaker, before I begin my remarks, I want to introduce some of my friends who are up in the public gallery today: Lawrence Walter, the government relations officer for the Ontario Nurses' Association; Shalom Schachter, interest arbitration and long-term-care regulation league for the Ontario Nurses' Association; and in the members' gallery I've got Sharleen Stewart, international Canadian vice-president, Service Employees International Union, Local 1.0n, Cathy Carroll, secretary-treasurer, SEIU, Local 1.0n, and Emanuel Carvalho, SEIU.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Could I ask the House to come to order so that I can hear the member from Nickel Belt. There are quite a number of private conversations going on.

The member for Nickel Belt.

**Ms. Martel:** Thank you, Speaker. When I was last speaking to this bill on March 29, 2007, I had just gone through the concerns the New Democrats have with the fact that at that time, as we spoke, there still was not a standard in place for care hours per resident per day in Ontario. Here we are, a number of weeks later, and there still isn't a standard with respect to the hands-on care that residents in Ontario long-term-care homes can receive every day. That's one of a number of reasons that we are not supporting this bill.



The second reason is the fact that the government has refused to put into the bill Ombudsman oversight for long-term care. Since as long ago as April 22, 2005, there has been a move among seniors' organizations in particular to have the current Ombudsman have oversight of long-term care. I want to read into the record a letter that was sent to Ministers Smitherman and Bradley from the seniors' advisory committee on long-term care. This is a committee, I should point out, of seniors' organizations that was appointed by this government to give advice and counsel to the government on issues affecting seniors. They said as follows:

"At its March 22, 2005, meeting, a motion was passed by we, the members of the seniors' advisory committee on long-term care in support of the government appointing a seniors' ombudsman for long-term-care home residents and people receiving home care services."

Some members also supported expanding the mandate of the seniors' ombudsman to include all provincially funded programs serving seniors: "This approach will contribute significantly to the health and well-being of older Ontarians; in fact, all Ontarians. Moreover, we believe that establishing the seniors' ombudsman aligns with the government's vision of ensuring seniors live safely and with dignity and receive the appropriate care where they choose to live." That was March 22, 2005.

On February 17, 2006, the Royal Canadian Legion, Ontario command, wrote to Premier McGuinty and said the following:

"I am writing on behalf of the Royal Canadian Legion, Ontario command, to request the expansion of the mandate of the Ombudsman of Ontario to include long-term-care issues. We are supported in this request by our provincial veterans services and seniors committee, our officers, our membership and many of your colleagues in the Ontario Legislature.

"To our chagrin, Minister Smitherman, who once supported the notion, is now suggesting that those who are not comfortable or satisfied with government mechanisms to resolve an issue may direct their issues to community-based channels that exist. None of these community-based groups has the teeth of an ombudsman and we do not even recommend a separate ombudsman. A mere expansion of the jurisdiction and mandate of the office of the Ontario ombudsman is what is needed."

The Legion felt very strongly that, in a meeting that they had with the Minister of Health in 2005, it was communicated to them that the minister was in fact going to establish an ombudsman provision for long-term care. That was why, when the bill was finally introduced in October 2006, they were very disappointed with the fact that there is no provision in the bill for an independent ombudsman or for the mandate of the current Ombudsman to be extended. So they put out a press release dated October 5, 2006, and said the following:

"The announcements made by the Minister of Health, George Smitherman, fall far short of protecting our seniors by not announcing an ombudsman to oversee long-term-care homes and investigate complaints of care.

The Legion has received many letters of support from members of the Legislature, including many Liberal MPPs, for the creation of an ombudsman for long-term care. At a meeting in March 2005, the minister asked the Legion to be patient and wait for this legislation—"long-term-care legislation"—"to be introduced. He indicated that his government would have a solution and create an ombudsman to oversee long-term-care homes and investigate complaints of care." Regrettably, that promise was not kept and nowhere in Bill 140 is there a provision for oversight, and the government of course didn't accept my amendment for that same oversight.

Let me tell you what some others who came to the committee had to say about an ombudsman. This is from the presentation made by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario. The recommendation is the following:

"Create an independent elder health ombudsman's office to receive and process complaints, both from long-term-care residents and from other seniors."

Here's the submission from the Canadian auto-workers: "We join in urging the committee to reconsider the decision to not provide for an ombudsman for residents under this proposed bill, but rather only provide for the possibility of an adviser to the minister and assistant to residents and their families. An ombudsman office is commonplace in the United States as an integral component of their broad regulatory regime for the nursing home industry, and an independent seniors' advocate or ombudsperson office would be a welcome reform for Ontario that fosters integration in service delivery."

The government tried to peddle its proposal in the bill of an office of the long-term-care resident and family adviser as the office that would respond to complaints from those folks who really wanted an independent ombudsman. As hard as they tried to peddle that office as the solution, and the response to those many organizations who wanted ombudsman's oversight, it's clear that they didn't get very far in that spin. Let me read into the record from a number of organizations again that are not satisfied with what the government has offered up and that indeed want an independent person to deal with long-term care. This goes back to the seniors' advisory committee, that same committee that's supposed to give advice to the government on seniors' issues. The government is supposed to listen to that advice.

1610

Let me go back to their August 18, 2005, letter. They said: "Representing more than one million seniors, the members of SACLTC support having a seniors ombudsman to advocate for long-term-care-home residents and to resolve consumer complaints about home care provided within Ontario communities. We feel the current system, which relies solely on government staff, is simply not responsive enough to ensure seniors' rights are protected in an objective and fair fashion. We recommend the ombudsman be independent of any ministerial control or influence and would have the power to investigate concerns and, within reasonable constraints,



direct the government to take remedial action when all other avenues" have been exhausted.

Here's what the Legion said in its letter to Dalton McGuinty about the need for independence: "Our experience as advocates for veterans has led us to conclude that some cases are never resolved through existing channels. And although we support resolutions of problems at the lowest level possible, some residents and their families never receive resolution to valid complaints. Families are often handicapped in pursuing their complaint about the care of a loved one by lack of access or the cost of access to relevant files which would allow them to validate their concerns. At the end of the day, there is no one with the investigative reach of the Ombudsman when all other efforts to resolve the problems have failed."

Here are some the presentations that we got through the committee hearings about this government's proposal for an office, which of course is not independent of the government. This is from the MS Society of Canada:

"While the creation of the Office of the long-Term-Care-Homes Residential Family Adviser appears to be useful and helpful, as is the strengthening of 'whistle-blower' protections, an ombudsman for long-term care should be created or the existing Ombudsman's responsibilities should be expanded to include long-term care."

Let me read one more into the record. This comes from the Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organizations. They say the following:

"We have been advocating for years for the establishment of a complaints office with an arm's-length relationship to the ministry. We, and many other citizens' organizations, have called for an ombuds-like office which could investigate and act on complaints as well as reports of witnessed or suspected abuse or neglect. The establishment of such an office could, if its existence were widely publicized, come to be seen as a safe venue for both residents and potential whistle-blowers to address. The ministry needs to recognize that the fear factor operates for staff as well as residents, especially when the bill ultimately leaves their safety from retaliation to the Ontario Labour Relations Board. Our recommendation remains. It is as follows: Establish an ombuds-like office for all senior care, community or residential, to which residents, family and staff can feel safe in reporting."

It was as a result of what we heard during the hearings and the result of hearing clearly from people that this office of long-term care that the government was putting forward was just not going to cut it in terms of an independent venue for complaints that I put forward the following motion on behalf of New Democrats under section 35.1 of Bill 140:

"35.1 The Ombudsman may exercise any functions with respect to the long-term-care-home sector in Ontario that he or she may exercise with respect to any matter to which the Ombudsman Act applies."

Clearly, our amendment would have expanded the mandate of the current Ombudsman to cover long-term care. Regrettably, on a recorded vote the government voted that down, voted down the opportunity for the

Ombudsman to have oversight into long-term care. It seems to be a common theme of this government. I don't know what they have to fear from the Ombudsman, because they did the same thing in Bill 103, which we just passed. The government wrote in a specific restriction to ensure that the Ombudsman didn't have oversight of the police complaints process. Here, the government voted down oversight of the Ombudsman of long-term care.

Last week, dealing with another health bill, Bill 171, I put forward an amendment to that bill to say that the Ombudsman should have oversight of hospitals. That was voted down.

My colleague Ms. Horwath, when the government was dealing with Bill 210, put in an NDP amendment to have the Ombudsman have oversight of children's services. That was voted down by the Liberals as well. I don't know what the Liberals are afraid of when it comes to the Ombudsman.

Clearly, many organizations who came before the committee said that independence was absolutely required and that this government's proposal for an office that would still report to the Ministry of Health just doesn't cut it, just is not appropriate and just will not do the job of dealing with individual complaints when there's no resolution—or systemic problems in long-term care.

That's probably why I received a copy of this letter that was addressed to Mr. Bradley, the minister responsible for seniors. It's dated February 20, 2007, after the clause-by-clause was over and after the Liberals had voted down an NDP amendment to establish oversight of the Ombudsman in long-term care.

It says as follows to Minister Bradley: "Ontario Command was pleased to be asked to sit on the advisory committee on long-term care, and we were honoured to participate with the many seniors' organizations that have so effectively represented seniors' issues across the province. Indeed, a lot of our advocacy is focused on the needs of veterans and seniors in long-term care, so this committee seemed to be a good fit with our priorities."

"Regrettably, we have come to the conclusion that the committee has little bearing on the policy and legislative decisions of the government. It is therefore with considerable disappointment that we have decided to withdraw from the advisory committee on long-term care. We are no longer comfortable sitting on this committee when its recommendations are ignored."

"The committee has made it abundantly clear that seniors need an ombudsman for seniors' issues and specifically for long-term care. Despite the recommendations of the advisory committee and many others for an ombudsman, the government chose to create a position within Bill 140 that lacks the independence, the transparency and the powers of an ombudsman. We do not believe that the Office of the Long-Term Care Homes Resident and Family Adviser is equivalent to an ombudsman, and we cannot support this position as an acceptable replacement for an ombudsman."



"We see little value to our sitting on an advisory committee when the advice that is offered by the committee is ignored. We believe that the failure of the government to accept the advice given by the advisory committee discredits not just the Legion but the other groups that offer their time and expertise on this committee. Ontario Command therefore regrettably tenders its resignation from the seniors' secretariat advisory committee on long-term care."

It was very clear from the committee hearings that many people, not just the Ontario Command—although they certainly have been advocating for Ombudsman oversight for a long time—many other organizations and individuals who came to the committee made it clear that what was required was an independent body for the investigation of complaints, for dealing with systemic challenges in long-term care and for advocacy. The government ignored what the public had to say about that and instead went with an office that is tied directly to the Ministry of Health, is not independent at all and will do very little, if anything, to resolve the ongoing concerns that are out there about where families can go, where residents can go, where workers can go when they need their complaints dealt with in a timely fashion.

I regret very much that the government was not prepared to extend the current Ombudsman's role to include oversight over long-term care.

The third reason that we are not able to support this bill has to do with the fixed-term licences that the government proposes in this bill. Through the bill, the government is tying the licences of homes directly to their structural compliance. If a home can't meet or refuses to meet or doesn't meet the government's standards with respect to capital upgrades, then the operating licence can be pulled. The NDP recommended voting against fixed licences and, instead, if there was a problem with respect to a particular home, have the government, through an individual licence, deal with anybody who is noncompliant and apply terms and conditions to that individual operator's licence.

We also pointed out that any of the structural upgrades to B and C beds were going to require a capital improvement program of the government. The government failed to deliver that in the budget. As we stand here today, there still is not an upgrade program in the province so that long-term-care homes can bring their B and C beds into compliance. We have serious concerns with that failure to have a program and with the fact that there is a fixed licence scheme that is in place. I want to read into the record some of the comments I made when I voted against the sections around fixed-term licences in the committee.

We heard, during the course of the public hearings, some very direct concerns from operators. Let me start with that. I'm talking about some direct questions that were raised with operators, particularly operators of small homes in rural areas and of not-for-profit homes. Those are the folks I want to focus on because the reality is, the chains will always be able to manage no matter

what. I'm not worried about the chain operations when I look at this particular section.

We clearly heard from small operators and from small not-for-profits that already financial institutions that they have a relationship with are raising concerns about what is proposed in this bill. This is in January. The nature of the concern is that these homes are now going to be a risk. It's leading those very same financial institutions to suggest that because of the risk, they would be increasing their borrowing rates or putting other terms and conditions on mortgages or new mortgages. That, of course, will increase the cost of borrowing. The only folks who are going to benefit from that are the banks.

I'm not interested in a scheme that increases the benefits to the banks. We can argue about whether or not the position being put forward by the financial institutions is legitimate. The reality is that we heard during the course of the hearings from people who said that this was already happening. We have to acknowledge that; we have to respond to it.

1620

Secondly, I look at why the government is putting forward fixed licences. I can only assume the government wants to do this because they're trying to ensure there's a redevelopment of B and C beds in Ontario. I'd ask the government to consider a more historical perspective around redevelopment. If you look at the experience of the renewal of D beds, 14,000 out of the 16,000 did rebuild within the time frame that was set out by the former Conservative government, without any licence tied to structure. So 14,000 out of 16,000, from my perspective, is quite a significant number of operators who complied. Granted, they complied because there was a capital funding project that was available, but I think that this government, in whatever it does, is going to have to acknowledge that and respond. Without any kind of capital program in place, like the Conservatives had in the last mandate, I don't think we're going to see any redevelopment. There will be a number of smaller homes, not-for-profit, even for-profit, that will not be able to manage the financial costs associated with redevelopment.

The final point I want to make is that if the government has specific concerns about specific homes, they could deal with those under section 99, which talks about conditions of the licence. Subsection 99(1) says, "(1) A licence is subject to the conditions, if any, that are provided for in the regulations." As I read that, I see that if the government has some specific concerns about specific homes that they think won't comply, even in an environment where there is a capital redevelopment program, then deal with those specific homes by attaching something to their own licence. Don't cover the waterfront with everybody in the way that it is being covered now with respect to the fixed licence.

My final point is that I think it was clear with the D beds and the government's capital program that homes and operators did step up to the plate and did make the structural changes that were required. I think that if this



government had a redevelopment program, the same scenario would follow: Those operators with B and C beds would also step up to the plate. You're not going to have 35,000 B and C beds recreated overnight into two-bed wards. But the D beds weren't altered overnight either. Clearly, any kind of structural plan, financial plan to aid in the restructuring of these beds will have to be carried out over a period of time, and the government can hopefully fix a set number of beds that it would like to see renovated, redone or upgraded each fiscal year.

I come down on the side of not having a licence with a fixed term because I think to tie a licence to the age and structure of a home is just going to cause all kinds of grief for smaller for-profit and not-for-profit homes in a way that they don't need to have problems caused. If the government was out there with a capital program, the experience that we have historically seen—and it is a most recent experience—is that operators will comply, will come forward and the redevelopment work will be done.

Some of us thought that during the budget the government was actually going to announce a capital development program for B and C beds, but there was nothing. As we stand here today in mid-May, there is still nothing with respect to a redevelopment program for B and C beds in the province, some 35,000 of them.

I can tell you, having listened to the presentations that were made during the course of the public hearings, if the government doesn't come forward with a redevelopment plan and continues to tie licences to structural compliance, you will absolutely see many small, rural for-profit and not-for-profit homes close. They will not have the financial ability to redevelop and be in compliance; they will not. We heard that very clearly during the course of the public hearings. We heard very clearly during the course of the public hearings that financial institutions were already telling small homes that they were going to increase the cost of borrowing because they see them to be a risk now as a result of this fixed-licence scheme. We heard that during the course of the public hearings. Yet the government has done nothing to respond to that, and the only people who are going to make money through this whole scheme are the banks, because they're the ones that are going to charge the extra premium because now they consider smaller homes a risk.

They're going to make the money, and too many smaller homes will not be able to have the money in place to actually do the redevelopment that is required. It will serve no one by having any number of smaller homes shut down in rural areas across this province. I don't know why the government didn't respond in a positive way, because they heard again and again from small operators who said this was a very serious problem for them.

The fourth concern I want to raise has to do with the lack of this government's commitment to the not-for-profits and the municipal sector in long-term care. The best argument that I can make in this regard has to do

with a submission that was put forward to us by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario on January 16, 2007. I want to read some of this into the record. The title is "Supporting Not-For-Profit Delivery."

"In Ontario, the trend has been toward increasing for-profit delivery of long-term care. Over 65% of the 12,000 new beds awarded in Ontario went to for-profit agencies, raising the share of for-profit beds to 52% from 48%. There is considerable evidence on the differences between for-profit and not-for-profit delivery in the long-term-care sector.

"Canadian evidence found that staffing levels were higher in not-for-profit facilities than in for-profit facilities, and health outcomes were better in not-for-profit facilities. As one set of researchers concluded, differences in staffing were likely to result in the observed differences in health outcomes.

"A review of North American nursing homes studies for 1990 to 2002 similarly concluded that for-profit homes appeared to deliver poorer quality care in a number of process and outcome areas. These results are consistent with the literature on for-profit and not-for-profit delivery.

"A systemic review and meta-analysis of all available peer-reviewed literature on for-profit versus not-for-profit health care delivery has served to eliminate all reasonable doubt about the evidence. The first two papers produced by this review showed that people were more likely to die in for-profit than not-for-profit hospitals on hemodialysis units. The third article concluded that for-profit hospitals charged significantly more than not-for-profit hospitals—19% more.

"Research has come to the same conclusion about health plans. A study of plans enrolling American medicare beneficiaries found that not-for-profit plans delivered higher quality care in all four clinical services assessed.

"As written, the bill does very little to support not-for-profit provision of long-term care. RNAO calls for four steps to enhance this dimension of the bill:

"(1) Amend the preamble to include a commitment to upholding the principles and conditions of the Canada Health Act and to promoting and supporting not-for-profit provision of long-term care.

"(2) Strengthen part VII by incorporating in section 95 a governing principle of supporting not-for-profit ownership of long-term-care homes so as to meet the commitment to promote not-for-profit care.

"(3) Strengthen part VII by including a right of first refusal for not-for-profit homes in the granting of any new beds. This would cover any provisions for competitive bidding under section 113 and any undertaking to issue a licence under section 98.

"(4) Amend section 113 to ensure that any competitive process should not disadvantage the establishment of not-for-profit homes or reduce the number or share of not-for-profit beds in Ontario."

As a result of that very compelling evidence that was put forward by RNAO, and the fact that RNAO itself



identified that the bill, Bill 140, did very little to support not-for-profit provision, I put forward a number of amendments that responded directly to the recommendations that were made by the RNAO in their submission. Let me tell you what happened.

With respect to including in the preamble a commitment to upholding the principles and conditions of the Canada Health Act and promoting not-for-profit provision of long-term care, the best that the Liberals could do was to put in a principle that said they were promoting not-for-profit provision. There was no mention at all in the preamble about committing to the principles and conditions of the Canada Health Act; nowhere does it appear in the preamble, despite what RNAO said. The government chose to vote down my amendment which talked about upholding the principles of the Canada Health Act and support for not-for-profit care, and the only change that the government made was a provision in the preamble about support for not-for-profit care.

What's interesting is that the preamble sets out the principle, but the body of the bill sets out those real provisions that would affect not-for-profit care. If the government were really interested in supporting not-for-profit care, there would have been some further changes in the legislation that actually put that in place—not just some spin in the preamble about how we care about the not-for-profit sector, but some actual provisions in the bill that would clearly indicate the government's commitment to not-for-profit care.

1630

Let me tell you what the government voted down in that regard. I put forward an amendment, just like the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario suggested, that said as follows:

“First refusal for non-profits

“(2) The minister shall give a right of first refusal to not-for-profit operators or municipal or county governments when establishing new long-term-care beds.”

Right of first refusal to the not-for-profits—the Liberals voted that amendment down. This would have been concrete evidence that they actually supported the not-for-profit sector, that it wasn't just spin in the preamble and that they actually meant what they said. When I moved a motion that said that for any new beds that are going to be considered, the not-for-profit sector will get the right of first refusal, the government voted that down. What does that say to you about this government's commitment to not-for-profit long-term care? I think it speaks volumes about the lack of commitment of this government to not-for-profit long-term-care beds.

Here's the second amendment that I put forward, again based on the recommendations given to us by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario:

“I move that section 113 of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

“First refusal for non-profits

“113(1) A competitive process may be applied after not-for-profit providers are given the first right of refusal for new licences.

“Restrictions on competitive process

“(2) The competitive process shall not be operated in such a manner as to disadvantage the establishment of non-profit or municipal long-term-care homes or have a detrimental effect on the number of non-profit and municipal long-term-care homes relative to for-profit homes in the area or in Ontario.”

It's very close to recommendation 3 that was made by RNAO to make sure that there would be no disadvantage to the not-for-profit sector if there was a competitive process in place for new beds. Did the government agree with my amendment that was put forward on behalf of RNAO? No, the government did not. The government voted down that amendment too. So a second area in the bill where there would have been some concrete evidence that the government was prepared to put not-for-profits first was voted down by the government members.

All we're left with is the government trying to spin in the preamble that they really are committed to not-for-profit delivery of long-term care. When it came to the government actually putting concrete measures into Bill 140 to give effect to the preamble, to make it clear that the government was in support and would use mechanisms and measures in Bill 140 to ensure that not-for-profits had the right of first refusal, or if there was a competitive process, not-for-profits would not be disadvantaged, when the government had the opportunity to put those measures in place, the government voted down the NDP amendments that would have done so.

What are we left with? We're left with a bill that in the preamble gives the government's spin that they care about not-for-profits and are committed to not-for-profit delivery of long-term care, but the rest of the bill, the body of the bill that puts into effect measures around the provision of long-term care and who gets new long-term-care beds, is silent on support.

The government had an opportunity to listen to RNAO. The government had an opportunity to put in place some measures that would give concrete effect to the spin in the preamble that they care about not-for-profits, and the government refused to do that. I think that speaks volumes, clearly speaks volumes, about the lack of commitment by the Liberal government to not-for-profit long-term care and not-for-profit long-term-care beds.

In conclusion, let me say this: I appreciated very much those people who came out to the public hearings. Many people over the more than four days that we sat came out to public hearings. ONA was very good to come out. SEIU was very good to come out. A number of other trade unions and their workers came out. We heard from a number of municipal operators and for-profit and not-for-profit operators as well.

The concerns that I raised here on third readings were similar to concerns that I raised on second reading, and those concerns have not been addressed. As we stand here today, in Ontario there is not in place a minimum standard of care for any resident in any long-term-care home anywhere in the province Ontario. The government



promised in the last election that it was going to reinstate a minimum standard of 2.25 hours. That didn't appear in Bill 140. All that appears is a very weak provision that says that, "In the regulations, we'll develop a standard of care. We don't know when, we don't know what it will be, and we don't know if it's ever going to come to fruition. Maybe we'll keep our fingers crossed." That is not good enough for residents and their families, who believed the Liberals when they promised in the last election that they were going to do something in this regard.

We disagree fundamentally with the fact that there is no independent ombudsman for long-term care. We heard over and over again why that was necessary and why the government's proposal for an office that essentially is run by the Ministry of Health is not going to work to respond to people's concerns. We remain very concerned about the fixed licences and very concerned that when the government had an opportunity to really show clear evidence of support for not-for-profits, the government refused to do that in Bill 140.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure you and other members of the House join with me in welcoming Shelley back. We haven't had a good Shelley rant in a while, and it was great to see you in fine form this afternoon.

I too want to thank those stakeholder groups who joined us today, the representatives from the SEIU and our nursing organizations. We appreciate your fortitude in coming out again for another day of discussion on Bill 140. I also want to join with Shelley—the member for Nickel Belt; sorry, Speaker—in thanking all those who came out to our hearings in Sudbury and London and Kingston and Toronto. We certainly heard a great deal from a variety of stakeholders, and we appreciated all of those people taking the time.

We have done a great deal of consultation with our various stakeholders over the last four years since we came into office, starting with the review that I did on long-term care back in 2004, where I met with over 100 stakeholders, different groups and organizations. We also issued the white paper, of course, leading up to the drafting of the legislation, and we had over 750 responses to that. We appreciated all the input we had moving into the drafting phase.

Again, during the committee hearings, we got some constructive criticism. We had two days of clause-by-clause hearings, during which time we reviewed hundreds of amendments, and I think the legislation is the better for it, having adopted many of those amendments and coming forward with a stronger piece of legislation here in third reading today.

If passed, our legislation will, of course, entrench in legislation the bill of rights that so many of our residents benefit from. It promotes zero tolerance of abuse and neglect. It provides whistle-blower protection for our staff, which is so important so that they feel secure in reporting any concerns that they have. It will require, in

legislation, that we have a registered nurse on site 24/7, and it incorporates a requirement that we use minimal restraints in our homes.

Ms. Martel raised a number of concerns which I will try to address over the afternoon. There was some fearmongering there, and I will address that as well in a subsequent opportunity. But I think this is a great piece of legislation, and it's moving the entire long-term-care sector forward in a very constructive and positive way.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound—Muskoka):** I wanted to get on the record a resolution I received from the municipality of Magnetawan on Bill 140. It was passed at the April 25, 2007, meeting, and it says:

"Whereas the council of the municipality of Magnetawan recognizes the need to provide long-term health care; and

"Whereas, with the current underfunding, municipal levies have continually increased to assist Eastholme, our home for the aged; and

"Whereas current funding is not sufficient to cover inflation on existing costs such as wages and benefits or utilities or cover the increased complex-care needs of the home's residents to meet ministry standards; and

"Whereas with the passing of Bill 140 in respect of a new Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2006, there are concerns that more of the home's limited resources will be spent on the new administrative requirements of standards, compliance and documentation, leading to less money getting to the bedsides of residents; and

"Whereas any possible increase to the accommodation subsidy each year is currently not a reliable source of funding; and

"Whereas the province has not lived up to its commitment to increase funding for nursing care by \$6,000 per resident; and

"Whereas the 2007 provincial budget did not provide any permanent additional operating funding for long-term-care homes; and

"Whereas the province has not addressed the lack of funding opportunities for boards of management operating district homes for the aged which have unincorporated townships within their jurisdiction;

"Now therefore the council of the corporation of the municipality of Magnetawan requests that the province provide increased subsidies to ensure adequate care of residents in long-term-care homes."

That was passed at the council meeting of Magnetawan on April 25. It shows the concerns they have with the government not keeping its promise to increase funding by \$6,000 per resident of long-term-care homes, as was promised in the 2003 election. They are passing this resolution, obviously, because they would like to see the government keep that promise.

1640

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South—Weston):** It was during just my second week here in this place that the member for Nickel Belt began her interjection on third reading of Bill 140. I must say the six-week intermission was well worth the wait, listening to her and the second



half of her hour this afternoon. Her first half-hour—and I want to refresh the memory of members of the House—was spent primarily, in fact just about all of it, on the minimum standard of care provision.

Today, I know the member for Nickel Belt devoted most of her time to the need for ombudsman oversight of long-term-care facilities, but I want to go back to her initial half-hour. One of the things she raised at the time—and perhaps she can tell us if she has yet to receive an answer. She had put in a freedom-of-information request because, as we have heard, this government claims that it would be unhelpful or a bad idea for us to once again have in Ontario a minimum standard of care. Seeing as how we received submissions from a fairly substantial list of organizations saying the exact opposite, the member for Nickel Belt asked, in her freedom-of-information request, for a list of the organizations, the witnesses, who agreed with the government. That was back—I hope I have the date right—on October 4. The last update we received was on March 29. Here we are in the middle of May, with the clock on this House rapidly ticking down, and I am wondering if the member for Nickel Belt has received a response to her very thoughtful query of the government.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** It's a pleasure to join the debate today, having heard from some other members of this House on this important issue.

I think, when you look at long-term care, you can't help but see perhaps yourself in the home someday. You sort of look at it through that lens: "I may be in that room or in that facility someday." Certainly you can look at your friends and your families who are maybe utilizing this service today. I don't think you can ignore the fact that we're all headed down that road ourselves and that this may be where we end up one day. If only for reasons of enlightened self-interest, you would want to make sure we're doing all we can do in that regard.

I think all members from all parties would agree that what we would like to see for ourselves and for our loved ones, relatives, is a place where there is dignity, where the health care standard is good, where the diet is good, where the food is of high quality, where the staffing levels are high, where there is proper training and where they're staffed well. So if you look at any piece of legislation, from time to time a responsible approach might be to review that legislation and see if you can't make it better, see if you can't improve upon things.

This has been a responsible approach, I believe. It has been a long process. It has dealt with some very important issues and there has been a variety of opinions expressed on these issues. It's time to move on. The bill, if passed, with the amendments that are presented as well, would establish staffing and care standards, which I believe were supported by the New Democratic Party. I'm not sure if they were supported by the official opposition. We would be extending the licences and the licence period, fixed licences.

Third reading is being presented with amendments that I think make this a bill that is worthy of passage at

this point in time. So I would ask all members to support this bill.

**The Acting Speaker:** That concludes the time for questions and comments. I'll return to the member for Nickel Belt.

**Ms. Martel:** I want to thank the members from Nipissing, Parry Sound–Muskoka, York South–Weston and Oakville for their comments. I didn't put the member for York South–Weston up to this, but I'm glad he raised it, because I was going to do it in my two-minute response. On October 4, I did put in a freedom-of-information request asking the Ministry of Health to give me the list of names of individuals and organizations who told the government during its consultations on long-term care that a minimum standard of care was not appropriate, not on. This came as a result of comments that were made by the minister on October 4, when the bill was introduced, and he said, "Consultations for the legislation led the government to believe minimum hours of care was a bad idea."

Speaker, do you know that it was two days ago—two days ago—that I finally got a response from the Ministry of Health, and the one and only group that said they were not interested in a minimum standard of care was the Ontario Long-Term Care Association. Through all the consultations, from the hundreds of people the government heard from, the Ontario Long-Term Care Association was the only organization that said they didn't believe in minimum standards of care. I have had that discussion before with Karen Sullivan, and we agreed to disagree on that point, but that was the only group. Everybody else came and said that standards were imperative.

That's what the government promised in the last election, that they were going to reinstate 2.25 hours of hands-on care per resident per day. The government promised they were going to provide an additional \$6,000 per resident in long-term-care homes as well.

We stand here today and there isn't a standard of care in place. There's a provision in the bill that says maybe by regulation, at some point, at some time, there will be some standard. We don't know when, how, where, or what it will be, despite the government's promise. We stand here today and know that in the last budget only a minimum amount was given to long-term care. Only about \$2,300 of the \$6,000 that was promised has actually been provided to residents in long-term care.

What do we need? We need the government to keep its promise and provide an additional \$6,000 per resident, we need a minimum standard of care that should be at least 3.5 hours of care per day, we need an independent ombudsman, we need a redevelopment program, and we need support for not-for-profit long-term care. We don't have those things in this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington):** I'm delighted to rise in support of Bill 140, our bill on long-term care. Actually, I'd like to begin by thanking my colleague



from Nipissing, Monique Smith, who's done wonderful work on this file over several years and I'm sure is very pleased to see we've finally gotten to third reading.

Just to bring viewers up to date, the Long-Term Care Homes Act, Bill 140, went through second reading when the House was sitting last fall. Then it went through extensive public hearings during January and I think early February. In fact, it travelled to a number of cities around the province for public hearings, and there were also public hearings here in Toronto. I know I was certainly fortunate to be included in the one day when they were here in Toronto and to have the opportunity to participate in the public hearings. Of course, now the bill has been amended and it is being reported back and we are working on third reading debate.

I think it may be useful to review some of the changes that were made when the bill was at clause-by-clause, when it was at committee.

One of the things that we did indeed hear from most of the groups was that there was interest in seeing the reinstatement of a standard of care for long-term care. You will recall, Speaker, that when the previous government was here, the Conservative government, the standards of care which were in place at that time had been removed, and there has been a lot of discussion since then about whether we should reinstate those. In fact, we have done just that. We have introduced into Bill 140 the power to make a regulation that will allow us to define the standards of care that are required in long-term-care homes.

You may ask, why didn't we just put some number right in the bill? Why didn't we legislate it? Well, in the first place, requirements change over time. As the acuity of residents in long-term care goes up or down, you may want to adjust that standard of care. But more importantly—and this was certainly true the day I was listening to delegations here in Toronto—the various different groups that were presenting to us, number one, didn't agree on how to define care; that is, they didn't agree on whether it should be nursing care, whether it should be care from just registered nurses, whether it should be registered practical nurses, which forms of care should be included in the standard, which forms of care should be excluded from the standard. And then there was substantial disagreement on the amount of care that would be provided.

1650

So while this may seem like an easy issue—just put it in the bill—in fact there is still significant discussion going on about how that issue should be defined. Once we have concluded those consultations, presuming, we hope, that the bill will be passed, then the regulations will be brought in, and there will be a regulation defining the standards of care required in long-term-care homes.

However, I think it really is worth noting that we, as a government, have not waited to have legislative standards of care. We have gone ahead and provided additional funding for long-term-care homes. Since 2004, we have provided the funding for 4,900 new direct care

staff in long-term-care homes; of those, 1,100 are nurses. In fact, just very recently we announced \$57.7 million. That money, almost \$60 million in additional funding to long-term-care homes, will be used to hire an additional 1,200 registered practical nurses in long-term-care homes.

So I certainly wouldn't want viewers to think that nothing has been done about improving the standard of long-term care. We have been doing that very actively each and every year that we have been here in office. We have been continually improving the standard of long-term care.

One of the things we're doing in Bill 140 is introducing the concept of a fixed-term licence. The term of the licence can range up to 25 years, depending on the age of the home. Some of the amendments that we brought into place for those older homes will extend the licence term.

Let me assure listeners that in fact with these longer-term licences, if a home fails to meet the standards, if a home fails to comply with the licensing requirements, then that licence may be revoked. That's a change from the way it used to be. There used to be a one-year licence but automatic renewal. The longer-term licences will enable us to actually keep track more closely of whether homes are complying with the requirements.

One of the things we have already introduced is unannounced inspections. What used to happen was that there was an annual inspection of each home, but it was set up well in advance. You know what happens when you set up an inspection well in advance: Everything gets scrubbed, spit-and-polished, and everybody is on their best behaviour because they know the inspector is coming. It's not really a very good read. So one of the things we did early on as a result of the work of my colleague from Nipissing is that we introduced unannounced inspections so that when we do an inspection we're getting a view of what really goes on in the home, not what goes on when they know the inspector is coming.

So we will have the capability to revoke licences. The other thing we are introducing in this bill is the ability to do long-term planning for beds. It's interesting, if you go back and look at the Auditor General's report on long-term care in 2002, the Auditor General noted that the government of the day did not have any planning tool in place that allowed it to look at communities and say, "This community is underserved in terms of beds; this community is over-served and in fact has beds going vacant." Bill 140 will allow us to put a planning process in place. We have actually already announced, if memory serves me, about 1,600 beds. Some of those are new beds; some of those are going to be rebuilt beds. So we are working at increasing capacity.

We were very fortunate in the Guelph area that there are 300 new beds being introduced. I know one of the most frequent complaints in my constituency office over the last three years has been from folks who call and say, "I have an elderly parent, and I would really like to have them placed in a bed in Guelph, but the nearest bed is an



hour or more drive away. There just is no bed available that's possible for my parent to go into." Particularly where there are elderly couples, there are some really heartbreaking stories, when you find perhaps the elderly husband is an hour away from Guelph; the elderly wife is unable to drive, which means she's unable to visit. There really are some very sad stories.

Again, as I say, I'm delighted that we are getting 300 new beds in Guelph, and this will enable us to do that sort of planning throughout the province to make sure that we're balancing the demand for beds with the supply of beds. For me, that is good news.

I spent some time when Bill 140 was under discussion—I guess it was perhaps in January—in one of the long-term-care homes in Guelph, St. Joseph's long-term care, a very good long-term care. I actually spent some time serving meals and talking to the staff and talking to the folks who live there. One of the things that I heard from the staff, both the front-line staff and the administrative staff at St. Joe's, and from other long-term cares in my area, was a concern that Bill 140 was going to introduce very onerous requirements for paperwork. One of the things that happened with the amendments is that we have reduced that requirement for paperwork as it appeared in the original bill. One of the things that I heard from staff at St. Joe's and other homes was that they were going to submit a tremendous amount of paperwork to the Ministry of Health, and they really didn't think it was all necessary. We have amended the bill to reduce the amount of paperwork that has to be submitted to the Ministry of Health.

Another thing that I heard, this time not so much from the administration of the home but from the workers who are on the floor working with patients, was that they were very concerned that they were going to be required to have to do very extensive charting on each and every one of the residents. They were very concerned that they would be spending so much time doing the charting required by Bill 140 that they would have less time to spend with the residents, obviously not the intended outcome. So Bill 140 has been amended to make the charting requirements less onerous. Obviously, we do need to keep accurate records of what is happening in the lives of residents of long-term-care homes, but we also want to make sure that the requirements on the staff are not so onerous that they can't get on with providing good care.

We also heard concerns that while it is a good thing that we have training for volunteers in long-term-care homes, again, we need to be careful that we're not requiring such onerous training that we create a disincentive for people to volunteer. Again, we have amended the act to, yes, require training for volunteers, but make sure that it is reasonable training and that we will still be able to recruit good volunteers and have them on the floors helping the staff and working with the residents.

So, I will certainly be supporting this bill. Along with those things like the whistle-blower legislation and the complaints procedures, those things that were in the

original bill, I think we've made some good changes. I'm very confident that this legislation will serve the residents and the workers in our long-term-care homes very well in the future if it is passed.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Miller:** I'm pleased to add some comments on the speech by the member from Guelph-Wellington on Bill 140. The member from Guelph-Wellington was talking about additional funding the government has put into the long-term-care area. The only thing I would like to point out, of course, is that in the election, they promised \$6,000 per resident of long-term-care homes, and I believe the number is somewhere around \$2,000 on what has actually been delivered. So they have not fulfilled the promise made in the 2003 election campaign. I've heard from people involved with long-term-care homes in my riding that they're actually worse off now than they were four years ago. In fact, I was talking to Belvedere Heights and met with the CEO, Bev Preuss, and a representative of the board a month or so ago, and she was pointing out how their acuity rating, I believe it's called, was such that they were receiving less money. I've also heard from municipalities in the area of Parry Sound. I heard from the mayor of Seguin township, Dave Conn, who's very concerned that the amount the municipalities were going to have to pay toward Belvedere Heights was going up 50% this year.

1700

There are some real challenges out there, and there's a number of municipalities in the Parry Sound area that support Belvedere Heights. They're putting more money in, and the long-term-care home is struggling to meet its needs. They do a good job, but it certainly was expressed to me that they're facing some real challenges and that they need some more help. It's really just a matter of the government keeping one more promise and funding what they said they were going to do in the 2003 election, and that is \$6,000 per client.

**Mr. Ferreira:** I'm pleased to rise in response to the presentation from the member for Guelph-Wellington. My colleague from Parry Sound-Muskoka talked about promises made in 2003 by this government—another one, and I want to quote directly from the Ontario Liberal plan for change regarding their commitments at the time for long-term-care homes. It reads, "Ensure residents get more personal care, including a minimum 2.25 hours of daily nursing care." That was in 2003. Here we are in 2007, and this government comes forward with Bill 140 respecting long-term-care homes, and you would expect that that promise would be upheld. In fact, it is not being upheld, and I want to ask the member for Guelph-Wellington why that is, why her government isn't keeping their promises.

I suppose it's a pattern of habitual promise-breaking on the part of this government, but this is one where constituents of mine—and I should add that one fifth of my constituents are seniors—have come to me and said repeatedly, "We have to improve the conditions, the quality of care that residents of long-term-care homes



receive." I will say that having a minimum standard of care would help to improve those conditions.

Back when we were in government, we brought in the 2.25 hours of minimum standards of care. We are now advocating for an increase, but we don't have any legislated in this province right now because the official opposition, when they were the government, did away with that. The present government promised they would rectify that situation. They haven't delivered. Perhaps the member from Guelph-Wellington could explain to us why that is.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** I had a different tack that I was going to take after the member from Guelph-Wellington and thank her for outlining some of the things that have happened in the long-term-care homes situation, but the two previous speakers have kind of forced me to go down this road.

But the first thing I want to do is thank the member from Nipissing for all the hard work she's done in the portfolio and the dedication and heart that she's put into this.

I happen to have a riding that was spotlighted by W5. *Interjections.*

**Mr. Levac:** What's unfortunate about the cackling that's going on on the other side is that they don't want to be reminded of their record, so I'm just going to have to do that. If you want to talk about this—do you know what the bottom line is here? We're all culpable to make sure that our seniors are taken care of, and the decades and decades of neglect for different reasons by different people is deplorable. So let's work together to try to get this thing corrected.

If you want to talk about stuff you've done and not done, I've done and you've done, you can play that game all you want. Let's work together to try to make these long-term-care homes exactly that. So let's talk about it.

Let's talk about the heckling on the other side. These are the guys in the opposition who during their time in tenure announced, on Canada Day, a 15% increase in copayments to our residents—on Canada Day. Then, if the NDP wants to say they're not guilty of anything, let's say this: They did the cut of \$29.3 million in 1994-95 to the Ontario drug benefit plan.

Let's stop playing this game. Let's talk about working together to try to make sure that our seniors are cared for. For Pete's sake, if we spend all our time in here going back and forth about who did what, who is not doing what, seniors are going to get left behind. If this is a bad piece of legislation, make it better. For Pete's sake, if you're not going to talk about what we can do for our seniors, then don't bother standing up, playing the party line as if everyone is saintly around here. The seniors in my riding deserve better, and I want to give them that.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** I appreciate the passion of the previous speaker and it all sounds nice, but the reality is that when you're sitting in the opposition, you have a responsibility as well to point out weaknesses and problems and failed promises that have been made to the electorate. As one of my col-

leagues in the third party mentioned, this current government, when in opposition and when running to be the government, made significant promises with respect to long-term-care facilities which they have failed to meet. That's a reality, and I think we have an obligation to remind them of that on each and every occasion.

I have to say—and I've been in this place for some time—in speaking to people who are involved in the long-term-care sector, I have never witnessed such concern about the future as I have in the past year or so. People are coming to me, talking to me about the problems they have meeting the demands and challenges that are being thrust upon them.

The closure of some of these institutions—and we heard a question asked in the House today, where an individual with a brain injury was now going into a long-term-care facility. We have institutions being closed and this is putting ever-increasing demands on long-term-care facilities and they do not have the expertise, they do not have the staff, they do not have the funding to meet those additional challenges which have been forced upon them by government policy.

I would make no apologies whatsoever. We can be as passionate as we possibly can be. We all want to do the best, but the reality is that the Liberal Party is in power, they made significant promises in terms of upgrading and improving this sector, and they have not met all of those promises. Some of them, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, are very, very significant.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Guelph-Wellington has two minutes to reply.

**Mrs. Sandals:** I'd like to thank the members for Parry Sound-Muskoka, Leeds-Grenville, York South-Weston and Brant for their comments.

I'm delighted that the member for York South-Weston has raised the issue of the campaign commitment that we made to reinstate the standard of 2.25 hours—the NDP standard of 2.25 hours—of care which the Conservative government did away with. In fact, as we've already mentioned, the bill has been amended to allow us to have regulations which will in fact embed a minimum standard of care.

However, I think it is worth noting, as the member for Parry Sound-Muskoka mentioned, that the level of acuity has gone up in our homes. As I mentioned, we want the standard in regulation because things change. In fact, we have met the standard of 2.25. Not only have we met it, we have significantly exceeded that standard. The latest statistics show us that across the province the current level of care provided in long-term-care homes is now at 2.86 hours of care per resident. So I am delighted to report that we have indeed met that promise we made in the campaign. Perhaps, when you make accusations about promises broken, you might actually find out what the true state is.

As I said before, I am delighted to support Bill 140. I do believe that this government has significantly improved long-term care and, with this bill, we will continue to do that.



1710

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** I'm pleased to join the third reading debate here on Bill 140. I think I have to first respond to the comments made by the member for Brant. I thought that was a wonderful dissertation, but I haven't heard him stand up and criticize the bill. So we're supposed to stand here and believe that everything about this bill is perfect because it was presented by the Liberals. Everything that we did in the past was the root of the problems in long-term care. He wants to appear to be somewhat magnanimous, that we should be working all together for the good of seniors in this province. That is the laudable goal, but as my colleague from Leeds–Grenville pointed out, it is our job to point out problems and inefficiencies and inequities in this piece of legislation and/or any other.

So I think for the member from Brant to get up and go on that bit of a tirade is quite remarkable and certainly doesn't add to the quality of this debate. If he wants to talk about a fair assessment, then where's his fair assessment on this bill? Where's his fair assessment of the problems in this bill? Stand up and criticize your government for the problems that they've created with this bill—the most controversial bill I've seen in my time in this Legislature.

I had the opportunity to go on the committee hearings this past winter. It was just unbelievable, the opposition to this piece of legislation. That wasn't coming from members of the NDP or members of the Tories. That was coming from stakeholders and concerned citizens and groups throughout the province of Ontario.

What took them so long to get this thing back to the House? From March 29, and here it is May 15, for the second day of third reading because they were so skittish about this bill. So what have they done? I predicted this would happen. They're waiting for the 11th hour and they're going to invoke time allocation on this bill so that there's not time for a wholesome debate that is so necessary for a piece of legislation that is so controversial and has created such a firestorm throughout the province that all of these different groups, particularly the people representing nursing home operators, across the province of Ontario have raised so many valid issues. They're stifling debate in this Legislature because, as we now know, the government is prepared to table a time allocation motion on this piece of legislation.

Now, that is unfortunate. The debate certainly hasn't been given a fair airing in this House or across the province in the hearings because so many of the things that were proposed have not been acted upon. There have been some amendments, but not substantive enough to make this bill—a bad bill—good. They've made a bad bill better, but it is still not good. Most of the problems that were there are still there.

It goes back to, again, their promises in the election of 2003. They simply rolled those out, holus-bolus, without any regard for their ability to carry them out, or the cost that was going to be associated with them. Yet they

raised taxes in this province to unprecedented levels, they've had spending increase in this province by \$22 billion a year since they took office, but they haven't been able to follow through with their promise to give \$6,000 more per resident in our long-term-care homes. In fact, they've done about a third of that. At that rate, they'd need 12 years—three terms—to get \$6,000, and by that time they'd need about another \$20,000 just to keep up with the cost. That might be a slight exaggeration, but you know the point I'm trying to make.

They want to talk about the previous government. The previous government made funding available to redevelop 20,000 D class beds in the province of Ontario. This government has done nothing to upgrade the B and the C beds, which is so necessary. I heard the member speaking earlier—I think it was the member from Oakville in one of the hits—about the dignity that is necessary to be given to our elderly people in long-term-care centres. You're not going to be able to give them that dignity if they're going to be forever confined to B and C beds, with ward-washroom-type facilities, whereas some people will be in A class beds which meet the new, current standards. We've done away with the D beds—the previous government did—but there needs to be redevelopment of the B and C beds so that those seniors who are among our most vulnerable have the opportunity to spend those declining years and their final years in an environment that does give them the dignity that is necessary.

That dignity won't come just by way of redeveloping beds or giving them a better room, so to speak. It also is in the care that is given to them. When I've been in the long-term-care centres in my riding, I have been so absolutely impressed by the commitment of those people working with our elderly in those long-term-care centres. But do you know what? You can only do so much. I know the minister or the parliamentary assistant was talking today about ensuring that there will be a registered practical nurse on 24/7 in these homes. That's great, but what I hear when I talk to a lot of people in homes is that what they really need for the residents is more personal support workers. If you're not getting the basic care—if you're not ill, the first priority is basic care, and sometimes the best care we can give somebody is maybe just a little bit of our time, maybe a little bit of our own compassion, maybe a smile or a nod or an acknowledgement or something. But when you're running helter-skelter throughout that long-term-care centre, trying to fill out paperwork and making sure that the forms are done so that some bigwig from the ministry doesn't come and slap you on the wrist and tell you that you're not compliant, you don't have time to give that personal touch to that worker.

You have to remember that not everybody in one of these homes has a great, broad personal support network. Maybe they're not in a community where they have family, or maybe they don't have family. Maybe they were without children themselves and their siblings have all passed on. They're pretty alone in that environment



sometimes. Sometimes the only people they really have as family are the other residents of that long-term-care centre who unfortunately may be in the same boat as themselves. They can have some comradeship and time together in some of the common areas. The interaction with people other than residents themselves could be a lot more if we actually had some time to spend with those people.

I understand that, yes, the basic care of course has to be the priority, but the environment in those homes has changed a great deal. I remember when Valley Manor opened in Barry's Bay, my hometown. The condition of the people who went into those homes was so vastly different from that of the people who go into those homes today. They didn't require the level of care. In fact, I always say that many of those people who went into Valley Manor pulled up in their cars, hoisted out their suitcases and went into their new home. While that may happen in some cases today, it's pretty rare. Because of the higher age of the people who are going into those homes, the less mobile they are, therefore the level of care that is required to assist them is that much higher. I know that some of those residents—and I refer to Valley Manor because it's the one I know best—had an activities director and they had all kinds of things these folks would do to amuse themselves during the day, and this and that, and they were actually physically active. As I travel through the long-term-care homes today, most of them are not physically active; in fact, some of them are physically unable. So, with that goes a greater requirement to be able to assist them, and that is something this government has not addressed, because they have broken their promise, as they are wont to do on so many issues. They have broken their promise to put forth the necessary funding for us to be able to give that level of care.

1720

This bill, unfortunately even with amendments, is still about pitting those people who provide the care in our homes against the general public who may not have a close relative or anybody in that home and don't understand the work that goes on there, trying to create this vision that this government is somehow the committed protector of those who are in those homes. But, as I have drawn the analogy so many times before, you can't get the job done if you don't have the tools. It doesn't matter how good your team is.

The Ottawa Senators—even though I'm a Leafs fan—I guess for many is Canada's team right now because they're on the verge of going to the Stanley Cup finals. We certainly, as much as a Leafs' fan can, wish them well. As good as that hockey team is—

**Mr. Ferreira:** Who do you cheer for, John?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** The Leafs.

**Mr. Ferreira:** Good man.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** —they won't have a hope in hell, as they say; they won't have a chance if we give all the left-handed players right-handed sticks and give the right-handed players left-handed sticks, or we tell them, "Lookit, the skates didn't show up. We've got some

really good ones from the 1960s. In fact, they're the super-duper Bobby Hull model, CCM, but go out and beat those Anaheim Mighty Ducks or those Detroit Red Wings. Come on, get out there and do it. Do it for Canada." You know what the result is going to be. It's going to be a disaster.

That's what we've asked our people in long-term-care centres to do. We say, "Here are all these new regulations, because we've got to make sure"—this is the government now—"we've convinced all those people out there, who better than George Smitherman and the Liberals to look after your vulnerable relatives as they get older? Who better to do it? We're going to make sure that nobody is better taken care of than—so we're going to pass this law, and we're going to pass regulation after regulation. And when you read those regulations, you're going to say, 'My goodness gracious, they're laying down the law. They are going to be tough.'"

However, George Smitherman or Monique Smith or anybody else over there ain't going to be in those long-term-care centres looking after your grandmother. But those people who are looking after your grandmother or your mother or your sister or your brother, or maybe even your son or daughter, because we have people in our long-term-care centres who are not old but they're in need of continuous assistance because of various conditions, those people are the ones being denied the tools to do the job, and the government insists on pitting them against the public. This government could be called the party of wedges, because that's what it loves to do: drive those wedges between people and groups. This is a perfect example of it.

Where are we going to be years down the road if we don't redevelop B and C beds that are needed? Our party is committed to do just that. Is there anybody out there who thinks, "Well, by Jove, in 15 years we're going to have fewer people who need long-term-care centres than we do today"? Is there anybody out there? I don't think so. We know that that need is going to grow greatly over the next generation. In fact, some of the people in this House within the next generation could be in a long-term-care centre.

So we already have problems. Some of our hospitals' acute care beds are being occupied by people who should be in a long-term-care centre. But we can't get them into a long-term-care centre because we don't have a bed for them in the long-term-care centre. The answer, for this government, is to bring in a piece of legislation that makes it harder for them to do their jobs without giving them the resources to do so.

There is no argument that there is a need for legislation to ensure that those people who reside in long-term-care centres are priority, they are protected and their welfare is paramount. However, that has to be in conjunction with the resources necessary to achieve that goal. It matters little to set good goals if you don't make a successful outcome possible. And that's what this bill sets us up to do. They give good goals, and that's the wedge on this that this government likes to drive in, be-



cause you can't argue about the goal of trying to bring better conditions and better services and more care to our seniors in long-term-care centres. No one can argue that. But only a fool would believe that you can do that if you don't also accompany it with the resources that are necessary. The resources that are necessary are the people to carry out those goals and, like everything else, people require investment.

Those people in our long-term-care centres are good investments. I've had the chance to work with them in the long-term-care homes, and those have been some of the best experiences I've had in my tenure as an MPP, when I can work alongside those people, work alongside them in an Alzheimer's ward and see the commitment, the compassion, the competence and the care that they display on a daily basis. Then they ask me, "How are we supposed to do this? This is what I love to do, but how am I supposed to continue doing this, burning myself out doing something I love? I'll do it for as long as I can, but I'm one human being given this task. I'm not getting the support I need from the province of Ontario." So then you look at them and you kind of throw up your hands and you have no argument, because you've seen it first-hand. You've witnessed the efforts.

I was working with one particular personal support worker in one of the long-term-care centres and I have to admit that I can't think of her name off the top of my head. But she was 62 years old. That's what I remember. I just couldn't believe the job she did. It was just unbelievable. But how much longer is she going to be doing it? Not much longer. I talked to some of the administrative staff there, and she was considered to be just gold, one of the best they have or have ever had. She's not going to be working there much longer because, life being what it is, at some point, if we live long enough, we all retire. She was just amazing. She was doing the switchover in the middle of the afternoon to make sure they all got ready for the supper meal, and all of them needing help with the lifts and this and that. I was exhausted just watching her, how she carried out that job, and with such joy—the smile on her face—and the residents of the centre clearly feeling that they were cared for by someone who not only did her job well but who really loved the people she was working for.

1730

I'm almost out of time; I can't believe it. This bill is designed to pit those kinds of people against the voting public, which this government loves to wedge us against. I'll have a chance in my two minutes.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Ferreira:** You wait your turn there, Ernie.

I'm pleased to offer a couple of minutes of response to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. He managed to weave in some talk of the hockey playoffs, and I commend him for that. I guess that helped him, if I may, rag the puck for 20 minutes, and I thank him for that.

One of the things that he did not touch upon—and I realize he wasn't in this House during that period, but he

didn't talk about his government's sorry record when they were in power here for eight years. I want to go back to the minimum standards of care. They took that away. They removed the 2.25 hours that were in place, that were implemented by the government from 1990 to 1995—it happened to be an NDP government. But that government, the Harris-Eves government, took away the minimum standards of care. I would like to ask him why that was done at the time and how he thinks that has benefited in any way the residents of long-term-care facilities in this province, because, as we have heard—and I'm going to get my 20 minutes very shortly—a number of different stakeholders and patients' groups and families of patients have called quite clearly for a minimum standard of care in this province. In fact, what they have proposed is three and a half hours per day per patient. We don't see that in this legislation. We hear talk of government measures that point to 2.86, or whatever figure was quoted earlier, but we do not see the re-establishment of minimum standards of care that were stripped away by the official opposition when they were in government. What we've seen is a continuation of that flawed decision that's been perpetrated upon the people of Ontario by this government today. I look forward to response on that.

**Ms. Smith:** It's my pleasure again to have the opportunity to speak to some of the comments that have been made today, not just by the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, but by other members in this House. I too have had the privilege of visiting over 45 homes across the province in my tenure as parliamentary assistant for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, and I have certainly seen first-hand the incredible work that's being done by our front-line workers.

I actually almost agree with the member from the third party about his view of the previous government's work—almost. Certainly what they did in long-term care in the entire health care field was nothing short of scandalous, and what they propose to do with their proposed cuts of \$2.6 billion from health care leaves much for us to wonder about as we move forward.

I do want to address some of the concerns that were raised earlier about the potential closure of homes. This legislation in no way closes homes. In fact, through our licensing scheme that we've set out in the legislation, it is allowing us the opportunity to plan and to ensure that we have the appropriate levels of long-term care across the province, something the previous government certainly did not have, and it was noted by the Auditor General in his 2002 report that the government did not have a systemic plan to determine where beds were most needed. There was a wide variety of levels of care across the province.

In the redevelopment program which they're so very proud of, they instituted beds in areas that were already over-bedded and did not provide new beds in areas that were under-bedded, thereby only exacerbating a problem that already existed, which was truly unfortunate. What our new licensing scheme will allow us to do is to give us



the time to plan, to ensure that we are redeveloping the beds that do exist in our smaller communities that are much needed and will continue to exist and to ensure that we're adding new beds where they are most needed. This is a planning tool, one that is much needed, one that was requested by the Auditor General in 2002, one that the previous government was unable to institute that we have now and that will benefit the entire sector.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I commend the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for his review of Bill 140 and what it will do to the long-term-care facilities in our province, contrary to what the government is purporting to do, which is to help seniors in their years of need. This bill doesn't do that. In fact, one of the areas where it's very, shall we say, short on meeting the goal is in the upgrading of the facilities, to make sure that all residents in these facilities have the same level of care that other people have. As the Speaker will know, we have A homes, B homes and C homes, and we used to have D homes. In fact, there may still be some around. But they all need to be upgraded. This government does absolutely nothing in this bill to facilitate that upgrading.

The member spoke about the quality of the people who work within the facilities as second to none in the world. These people work their hearts out to provide high-quality service for seniors, but they can't do it in the facilities that presently exist, to give the kind of service that these people are entitled to. Yet this government, after promising to do that, does nothing of the sort.

There were a number of things they promised to do for seniors: to provide \$6,000 more funding per resident; to put an Ombudsman in place so that the services could be monitored as we went along. None of these things are in the bill. Why is this bill before us in this form when in fact it doesn't meet any of the promises that they made to the seniors of this province? That's the question we need to ask the government: Why would we have a bill to deal with seniors' issues in this province when it does absolutely nothing to meet the challenges that the seniors said exist and that this government promised to fix?

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I'm pleased to respond to the comments made by the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. He speaks to Bill 140 with passion, with eloquence and with a clear understanding of the issues that are out there in communities like his, like mine, across this province, where seniors are being ignored and abandoned, where they're being treated with disdain and disregard by this government, and all the more sadly because, make no mistake about it, this government made some pretty significant promises about how it was going to improve the lot of seniors in Ontario four years ago, when it got elected, in 2003.

I want folks here to know that, like the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, whether I'm at the Welland market on Saturday morning or over at the Hungarian Hall, as I was on Mothers' Day, or up at Rice Road Greenhouses or up at the Thorold market or the St. Cath-

arines market, like I was last Saturday, the one single thing—

**Interjection:** What about the Legion?

**Mr. Kormos:** —or any number of Legion halls down where I come from—the one single thing that's brought to our attention by seniors, most of whom—all of whom, darn it; let's cut the fluff—have worked incredibly hard. Many of them are vets or the spouses of vets. They come and they say that even the most modest bit of assistance—not the insults, not the 50-cent, 60-cent, 70-cent increase in a monthly pension cheque. These are people who have already paid their dues.

John Yakabuski, the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, speaks about seniors with a passion and a heartfelt concern for the future of seniors in his communities and across this province. I say that people would be well advised to take heed of what he's had to say to them today.

**The Acting Speaker:** That concludes the time for questions and comments. I'll return to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** I appreciate the comments from the members from York South–Weston, Nipissing, Oxford and Niagara Centre. Clearly my colleagues in the third party agree that this bill not only fails to address the true issues in long-term care, but it has many flaws. So many of them stem from the problems that this government created for itself by making promises that it either had no ability to keep or no intention of keeping. That's something I hope the electorate here in Ontario will give great consideration to as we approach the date of October 10.

1740

When the member from Nipissing compares our record on long-term care to this government's record, there is nothing to compare with this bill and what it is doing to long-term-care centres and their ability to provide help to seniors. You go to the last government, where they redeveloped 20,000 beds—there's no such thing in this bill, nothing in the new budget, absolutely nothing to deal with the impending crisis in long-term care. Rather than dealing with the problems that we know we're going to encounter in the future in long-term care with regard to the numbers and the sheer size of the challenge, it is more interested in playing politics and pitting one group against another, and using the most vulnerable people in our province—our seniors in long-term-care centres—as pawns for their political gain. That's the kind of thing that this government has been doing for four years, and it will continue to do that until October 10 when I hope the people of Ontario will have the final verdict on the job that this government has done.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Ferreira:** I'm delighted to be our party's second speaker on Bill 140, An Act respecting long-term care homes. As my friend from Niagara Centre points out, it looks like we will have one more session of debate on this bill and we may not hear from many more of my colleagues here in the third party, the NDP caucus.



Earlier this afternoon, we heard the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke use a hockey analogy. I'm going to use a baseball one at the outset of my comments. I'm actually pinch-hitting this afternoon. My friend from Timmins–James Bay unfortunately couldn't stay with us for his turn this afternoon. I will try my very best to hit one out of the park, but if it happens to be just a single or a double, I ask the viewers at home for their indulgence as I work my way through Bill 140.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ferreira:** I hear a comment from the member for St. Catharines, who I know is an avid baseball fan. Thank you for that.

I want to also acknowledge three of our friends here from SEIU who have remained in the House to watch the debate this afternoon. I appreciate their vigilance and the good work they are doing on behalf of their members. In fact, one of my very first meetings as an MPP was with the president of an SEIU local, who happens to live in my riding. She came to me to talk about her local and her membership's concerns with this bill, and I will talk about those.

During my short time as the member for York South–Weston, I've also had the opportunity to visit a number of long-term-care facilities in my riding, where I have had the chance to speak to some of the caregivers, the workers, the patients and their family members. We've talked about this legislation. I've appreciated their feedback, whether it's at the Harold and Grace Baker Centre or at Leisureworld, also in my riding. The folks at Leisureworld gave me the opportunity to present my very first petition in this House specifically on this very topic. That was signed at the time by nearly 200 residents, family, staff and volunteers. I want to quote the preamble to that petition so we can think clearly about what this is all about. It goes as follows:

"The issues facing residents in Ontario's long-term-care homes are well known: Staff run off their feet, a double standard of privacy between new and older homes, a lack of appropriate funding for food. These and similar stories have been told in the media, the Legislature and during the public hearings on the new Long-Term Care Homes Act. The government also acknowledges that more needs to be done. Providing more time for resident care, eliminating three- and four-bed ward rooms and enhancing meal menus, however, requires government to move from acknowledgment to action."

That was the preamble to their very well-thought-out petition which has been presented not just by me, but by dozens of members of this House. That last line, "acknowledgment to action," is what we have wanted from this government on the issue of long-term-care homes. It's based on their own set of promises. I quoted one of those promises earlier and it aroused a great deal of passion from the member for Brant, who got up and said that we all care deeply about improving living conditions and the situation of seniors in this province. I agree with him and I think we all in this House agree with his comments. We all want to work to improve the

conditions for residents of long-term-care facilities in this province.

But again, and I want to go back, it was his government that made the promise, among many, on the minimum standards of care. I want to quote it again for the benefit of the members on the government side because this is what they will have to answer to when they hit the hustings later this year to seek re-election. This was the promise: "Ensure residents get more personal care, including a minimum 2.25 hours of daily nursing care...."

That isn't part of this legislation. This legislation does not include a minimum standard of care. It's not there. And yet that was the promise that this government made. Also, I want to say again that it was the standard that existed in this province when our party formed the government. As we know, it was done away with by the Progressive Conservatives when they were in government for eight years.

We asked for that. We provided a number of amendments to that effect following second reading, when we went through the committee process, and each and every one of our amendments was turned back by this government. They said no.

On the issue of minimum standards of care, it was the health minister who suggested, in a newspaper article that appeared in the Timmins Daily Press, "Consultations for the legislation led the government to believe minimum hours of care was a bad idea." If I were to ask our friends here from SEIU if they thought that minimum standards of care was a bad idea, I think I know what their answer would be. They'd say, "Quite the opposite, Mr. Ferreira. In fact, it is a very good idea and it is what we need. We need minimum standards of care to be brought back into force here in Ontario."

It's not just our friends from SEIU who have said this to us and to the government. At committee hearings, we heard from an extensive list of stakeholders who said, "Bring back a minimum standard of care," and many of them agreed that that new standard should be 3.5 hours per resident per day.

Here's just a sampling. The Ontario Nurses' Association said, "Provide a per resident guaranteed minimum level of RN care to conduct assessments." I'm afraid the member for Oxford is gone, but here's what the Oxford county council said: "Commit to additional funding to ensure that the average long-term-care home is able to provide a minimum staffing level of three hours of on-site nursing and personal care per resident per day."

It goes on. The comments at committee of the Ontario Health Coalition, which worked with CUPE and a number of other local and regional health councils, were: "Amend the bill to require cabinet to set a minimum staffing standard in the regulations. The regulations should require the minimum care standard of 3.5 hours of hands-on nursing and personal care per day."

The member for Guelph–Wellington would probably be interested in this from the Guelph Wellington Health Coalition. Here's what they said at committee: "The Ontario Health Coalition is advocating 3.5 hours of care per resident to become the standard minimum hours of

care by all providers. This is not the optimum but it is necessary for maintaining clinical and management standards.”

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A couple more—and I have a number of them. In fact, it's a lengthy list, but here's somebody who works in the system, a woman by the name of Wendy Hawthorne, a personal support worker from Ottawa. She said quite succinctly, “Set a standard of 3.5 hours for personal and nursing care.”

Then, lastly, from an operator: Maxville Manor, at committee, said to define a minimum of service and fund it adequately. This government has not defined a minimum—they have not put that into the legislation—and they are not funding the system adequately.

Earlier, at the outset of my comments, I referenced the preamble to a petition that I had read into this House several weeks back. That same petition asked for this government to invest additional monies into long-term-care homes in this province, and I want to quote those figures. They asked for an increase in the operating funding by \$290 million this year and \$214 million in 2008. They also asked for the provision of \$9.5 million to begin implementing a capital renewal and retrofit program for older homes—again, calling for significant investment, and the government hasn't delivered. It wasn't in that document they presented here in this House in late March, and certainly that level of commitment of investment is not found in the legislation that we are debating here today.

I've got a few more minutes left here before I get cut off. I want to pay tribute to the many, many workers who do their utmost to look after our seniors. One of those came to my very first town hall meeting in the riding of York South–Weston. One of the things I committed to when I was elected was to hold monthly town hall meetings, which had not been done by my predecessors. On my very first one, a constituent, a woman by the name of Daphne Richards, came to that town hall with her husband. What I do at these town hall meetings is, I bring my constituents up to date on different pieces of legislation before the House and what I and my party are doing on those pieces of legislation. We got to talking about Bill 140, about long-term care. Daphne Richards, whom I had known from before, rose to speak about her

own experiences. She has been a caregiver in a long-term-care home for the better part of 25 years now. She is run off her feet each and every day. She is overworked. As much as she would like to, she simply cannot provide the level of care to each and every one of her patients that she would like to, yet she is an absolutely exceptional caregiver. I got that from no one less than Jack Layton, leader of the federal New Democrats, because Daphne Richards looked after his dad in the last few months of his life when he suffered from Alzheimer's and was himself in a long-term-care facility. It was Daphne Richards who provided excellent, compassionate care to Mr. Layton's father.

But as Daphne spoke at that town hall meeting, she talked about the conditions she works in. They are not ideal. They are a detriment to her and her well-being, but also to the well-being of the patients she looks after, because there are not enough hours in her working day to be able to do all she needs to do, and that's a shame. It's also why we need to legislate minimum standards of care, not the 2.25 as existed previously, not 2.86, as I believe was the figure that was quoted by one of the members on the government side earlier this afternoon, but 3.5, which, as I mentioned earlier, was the figure that was repeated often during the committee hearings.

I see you're watching the clock, Mr. Speaker, and I'm quickly running out of time here.

There's the member from St. Catharines applauding me yet again. I thank him very much for his applause.

Our party will be voting against this piece of legislation, because we think—

**Interjections:** No.

**Mr. Ferreira:** Yes, dear friends on the government side, because we think that Ontarians deserve better, that we can do better, not just on the issue of minimum standards of care, but on a host of other issues where this piece of legislation is deficient.

I'll continue; I'm keeping a close eye on you. Oh, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll finish off tomorrow night.

**The Acting Speaker:** It being close to 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned.

*The House adjourned at 1755.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*



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Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.



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Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

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de l'Ontario**  
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**Tuesday 15 May 2007**

**Mardi 15 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 15 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 15 mai 2007

*The House met at 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### TIME ALLOCATION

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the government House leader.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Thank you very much, sir. I hear interjections in the background.

I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 69, An Act to allow for information sharing about regulated organizations to improve efficiency in the administration and enforcement of regulatory legislation and to make consequential amendments to other acts, when Bill 69 is next called as a government order the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That there shall be no deferral of any vote allowed pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to ten minutes.

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number 372. I look to the government side to lead off. I recognize the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** I'm pleased to be able to lead off tonight's debate on the Regulatory Modernization Act, 2006. I think it's important at the outset to just speak about the purpose of this type of legislation. We pass numerous laws and regulations, not only in this House but within the ambit of government, for extremely important purposes. We pass them for health and safety. We pass them to ensure that our food is safe. We pass them to ensure that the workers who work in our workplaces are safe. We pass them for numerous reasons, and every ministry has had a hand in the laws and the regulations that are passed.

We want to ensure at the end of the day that the people of Ontario are protected as they should be and as they expect to be. We want to ensure that those who would be

unscrupulous in any area are targeted by the regulations and have those regulations or laws enforced. But we do not want our legislative or regulatory scheme to get in the way of the good hard-working men and women or the business owners who are trying to build their businesses and, in the course of it, build the economy of their community or the province. We want to make sure, therefore, that our regulations are fair, enforced where they should be, to the extent that they ought to be, but do not impede businesses where they should not.

That is the purpose of this important bill, this important step, because at the moment, we have regulations by all different ministries and we have enforcement arms in different ministries, but the enforcement arms, as they have developed over the years, do not necessarily speak to each other. They don't work in concert with each other. They don't co-operate with each other, not because they don't want to but because, by statute, by rule, they're not allowed to. This type of non-communication or inability to communicate would astound most people outside the walls of this Legislature. So one of the purposes of this type of legislation is to ensure that ministries within the same government, often dealing with the same businesses, have the fundamental right to communicate with each other, to pass information to each other, to ensure that where health and safety issues are spotted, they are identified completely, and if they appear to contravene a regulation or a law, the regulation or law is fully enforced; to ensure that where a business is not complying with, for example, the Employment Standards Act, it has those rules enforced; but also to ensure that businesses do not see a steady stream of regulatory ministries coming to the doors, requiring the business to stop production or slow down production to answer essentially the same questions over and over.

1850

It is not the creation of one ministry of enforcement. It is not the creation of more bureaucracy. It is, in fact, a reduction and the creation of less.

How are some of the ways that this might work? Let me give you an example from my previous time as the Minister of Labour. We had an issue with workers' compensation and some businesses having to pay more in terms of workers' compensation premiums because other businesses were not paying their share. We had a situation where we wanted to enforce workers' compensation, we wanted to enforce the health and safety rules to make it a healthier workplace, a safer workplace, to ensure that the workers and the businesses were paying



the premiums that they should to protect the workers that needed to be protected. We launched into an enforcement regime, where appropriate; a regime that has had tremendous results, a regime that I might indicate has resulted in the reduction of injuries in workplaces by up to 20% in just over two years—an astounding decrease of injuries.

What we found when we started the process, though, is that the enforcement arm of the Ministry of Labour had difficulty relaying information to the Ministry of Finance with respect to unpaid premiums, not because they didn't want to, not because they shouldn't be able to, but because they legislatively couldn't. There was a long process we had to go through in order for that simple exchange of information to happen. Nothing revolutionary; just passing information. That's the type of barrier that people outside these walls would not expect would exist within the same government. That's the type of barrier that should not exist. That's the type of barrier that in fact makes it less effective, less efficient; does not properly safeguard health and safety; does not ensure that we enforce the rules and ensure that premiums that should be paid to, for example, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board are in fact paid; does not ensure the effective use of government resources.

It took us a long time to get over those hurdles. What this Regulatory Modernization Act will ensure is that we can overcome those hurdles in a much easier and more systematic fashion; again, without taking away the power or authority of individual line ministries; without creating an additional layer of bureaucracy—in fact, reducing the red tape while at the same time ensuring that businesses which properly face regulatory regimes don't have to always answer the same questions from different ministries on different days.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Bentley:** On different days; absolutely. For that reason—I just have about three more minutes' worth of fabulous material to share with people—we've introduced this regulatory modernization bill. It's designed to achieve the purposes which I know members on all sides of the House have actually spoken to: improve health and safety, for example, and improve the enforcement of the appropriate rules and regulations while decreasing the type of bureaucratic maze and red tape that has so often affected businesses in this province.

I'm very pleased that my colleague has seen fit to introduce this legislation. I look forward to the discussion and the debate of the legislation. I look forward to hearing the comments on how it might actually make for a much better, much tighter regulatory scheme in the province of Ontario.

When businesses don't have to answer continuously the same questions to different ministries, they'll be able to get on with their job, which is creating wealth, employing people, assisting the economy in Ontario. When different ministries of government do not need to ensure that they're using resources unnecessarily, they'll be able to target those resources to the businesses that most need them.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate on the motion?

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** I always like to outline to viewers when they're tuning in to the parliamentary channel on an evening like this and wonder what the devil these people are talking about—what we're talking about this evening is effectively another closure initiative brought forward by the McGuinty Liberal government. What that means is they're closing off debate, they're limiting debate, they're limiting opportunities for those of us in this assembly who were elected by the people, the residents of our ridings, to ensure that their views and concerns were heard in this place. Those opportunities are severely limited.

I'm not suggesting that this tool, if you will, has not been utilized by other governments; it certainly was by the Progressive Conservative government and by the NDP government. But what I think strikes home with us, sitting on this side of the House, is the frequency with which this tool is now being used by the Liberal Party now in government. This is another indication with respect to the sincerity of commitments they made during the 2003 election when they had, on their high horse, talked about, "We're going to reform things in this place: democratic renewal etc."

Indeed what we have had is a worst-case scenario. If you have had the opportunity to sit on a committee, you've seen how the Liberal members, even though they may disagree with a particular bill or an initiative or elements of a piece of legislation, are there simply to do the bidding of the unelected officials in the Premier's office who dictate the position the party will take. These folks, who are supposedly elected to represent the concerns and views of people in this province, are there simply to do the bidding of some unelected guy in the corner office, working for the Premier or people who are operating consulting firms, doing significant business with the government, making money hand over fist and advising the people who run the province what the decisions should be. That's the shameful aspect of what's happening. The position taken by the Liberal Party when they were in opposition was that this was all going to change, that we weren't going to see these time allocation motions.

If you look at the order paper, what do we have now, nine bills on the order paper? At least seven of them are now time-allocated. Probably, before we finish the session, we're going to see all but one, which is the road safety bill, which was a negotiated agreement from our side with respect to accepting a few opposition amendments—I don't think we're going to see time allocation on that, but virtually every other piece of legislation on the order paper. The government, the Liberal government, the McGuinty Liberal government is going to restrict and limit debate on those pieces of legislation.

We had one earlier today, Bill 140, long-term-care legislation—very significant changes to long-term care in this province—and debate has been cut off. What, two days? Two days of opportunity to talk about significant reforms to long-term care in Ontario and the failure,



again, of the Liberal government to meet promises it made which convinced voters to put an X beside the Liberal candidate's name in the 2003 election. You can recite a long list here, and I'm not going to get into it, but we're talking about democratic renewal this evening, where they've broken those promises, and long-term care earlier today, in the afternoon debate, where again they've time-allocated the legislation and limited the opportunities.

1900

I just want to say briefly about this legislation that debate is being limited on, Bill 69, that one of the elements of it has concerned us and concerned I think many people in the business community, although I am somewhat critical of organizations representing business, small business especially and medium-sized businesses in this province who in too many instances are sitting on the sidelines, not getting engaged and not representing their membership to the degree they should be in so many respects.

This is one of these instances where this legislation, according to our critic, Gerry Martiniuk, the member from Cambridge, is going to create something described as a super-inspector. I would think anyone in business should be concerned about the implications of these so-called super-inspectors. What it means, we're advised, is that someone who may be a labour inspector is going into a business for perfectly legitimate reasons—or maybe not—sees something that he or she feels violates perhaps a health and safety regulation or a health regulation, which may be the district health unit or may be, in the view of the labour inspector, a violation of one of the environmental regulations and the significant red tape that's been brought in by this Liberal government. So what they can do is get involved in areas outside of their own jurisdictions and responsibilities.

What we're looking at is in effect, I think, significantly increased harassment of people in the business of doing business in this province. Is this the right time to be doing this? Obviously we want workplaces to comply with the rules that are in place, but quite often we see overly aggressive inspectors who in some instances are creating significant difficulties.

The business environment of this province right now—we heard a comment today, and I have yet to have it confirmed, but we know there are at least 130,000 manufacturing jobs lost. We heard 175 from the NDP leader today. Whether that—

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** How many new jobs?

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** McJobs.

**Mr. Runciman:** Well, almost half the new jobs in Ontario are government jobs. They're civil service jobs and they brag about that when we're seeing a significant erosion, a hollowing out, of the manufacturing sector in this province while this government is in office. They can brag about creating 40,000 new government jobs? That's a shameful defence.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Ottawa Centre, please come to order. The Minister of Agriculture and Food, please come to order.

**Mr. Runciman:** It's interesting to see the reaction of Liberal members when you start talking about some real problems confronting this province and the fact that they have not done a very good job. A very poor job, and we're seeing significant impact on communities right across this province, but especially small-town, rural, medium-sized communities—Cornwall, for example, Chesterville, Belleville and Peterborough. We can recite a laundry list.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** I'll ask the member for Ottawa Centre to please come to order.

The member for Leeds-Grenville.

**Mr. Runciman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is the sort of intimidation effort we see consistently by the Liberal government, especially when they're dealing with women members of the opposition; whether it's the Liberal caucus or the NDP caucus, screaming and shouting down attempts to intimidate women members of the Legislature.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Runciman:** Mr. Speaker, if there's something controversial, you can count on the Liberal members screaming them down, shouting them down.

**Mr. Patten:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to know when the Legislature has provided funding for theatrical lessons for members.

**The Acting Speaker:** That's not a point of order. I'll return to the member for Leeds-Grenville.

**Mr. Runciman:** I certainly do not want to lecture the Chair, and I hope it's not interpreted that way, but I would encourage all members to consider—and I want to follow this myself—that when anyone rises on a point of order in this place, they should cite the standing order. This is abused on a consistent basis in this place. It used to be the case that when you stood on a point of order, you would refer to the standing order that you were concerned about, and that has gone by the board. I just mention that as a personal concern of mine. We see this abused on a consistent basis, not just by the government members, but perhaps more so by government members, introducing Aunt Mary in the fifth row and that sort of thing. That never used to happen. When I was first elected here, that sort of thing never occurred. We've lost 20 or 30 minutes in this place in introducing everybody in the assembly. It's chaotic and I think it does a disservice to this place.

Anyway, I'm getting off message here. I'm going to sit down. I've more than used my time. This is just another effort. When you look at the slush fund scandal, the OLG scandal, this government wants out of here badly. They want to get everything out and done, by the board, simply because the people of Ontario are starting to have increasing awareness of just what kind of government, a bad government, is now sitting on the benches opposite.



**Mr. Kormos:** We're debating a time allocation motion this evening. That's a guillotine motion; it's a jackboots motion. It's a motion that's designed to shut down democracy, shut down debate, shut the doors on opposition members and the huge numbers of members of the Ontario public they speak for.

I'm pleased to be here tonight, along with my colleague Michael Prue from Beaches—East York. I suspect that once Joe Tascona from Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford speaks, who of course is here in the trenches, we won't hear very much from the Liberals. I'll bet you dollars to doughnuts right now that we're going to hear precious little, not but a peep, from the Liberals.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Kormos:** What did they do last night? They boycotted their own motion. The Liberals boycotted their own motion. They did. I was here. Liberals move to sit evening sittings. Do they want to sit to 9:30? No. I sat here and had to argue with them to not shut this place down at 10 to 9, after the Liberals had moved to sit here till 9:30. And of course they used their majority to force their way on valiant opposition members. They did. Bully tactics, disdain for the opposition, disdain for the Parliament, and showing the people of Ontario but the back of their hand.

I find it repugnant that once again we're debating a time allocation motion.

**Mr. Patten:** So do I.

**Mr. Kormos:** Mr. Patten interjects that he finds it repugnant as well, and I understand. That's why he's leaving. He can't put up with the antics and the clowning of Liberal colleagues here. He's disgusted with their abuse of the standing orders. The member for Ottawa Centre just can't take it any more and he wants no part of it. He wants out.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Kormos:** I think you've got a point of order over here.

1910

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I bring to your attention standing orders 23(h) and 23(i) regarding the making of allegations against another member or the imputing of false or unavowed motives to another member.

**The Acting Speaker:** I don't agree that there's a point of order. I'll return to the member for Niagara Centre.

**Mr. Kormos:** Thank you kindly. I want to say to the member for Mississauga West: Did you get beaten up a lot in high school? Is this an act of revenge? Are you using the immunity of the House with the will to retaliate against anybody who ever roughed you up? It gets awful irritating. Do you know what I mean? It gets awful irritating.

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford):** He's a rookie.

**Mr. Kormos:** Mr. Tascona interjects.

**The Acting Speaker:** I would remind the member for Niagara Centre that he should make his comments

through the Chair and that he must make reference to other members by their riding name.

**Mr. Kormos:** What I was doing was pausing so that the hard-working folks from Hansard could get down the interjection. See, I have consideration for these people forced to work into the dark of the night. Some of these folks, travelling home long distances, by the time they leave here at 9:30 or a quarter to 10—that's if the Liberals bother debating their own motion—they're not home until 10:30, 11 o'clock at night. They don't make MPP salaries; far from it. These good workers from Hansard, they didn't vote themselves a 25% salary increase in December. They may well have wanted to. I can't think of a single worker in this province who wouldn't have loved to vote themselves a 25% salary increase and then have it sweetened up with a little 2% kiss, come—

**Mr. Patten:** What's your salary?

**The Acting Speaker:** I won't warn the member for Ottawa Centre again.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr. Patten, leave the chamber.

**Mr. Patten:** No.

**The Acting Speaker:** I name the member for Ottawa Centre. Mr. Patten, please leave the chamber.

*Mr. Patten was escorted from the chamber.*

**The Acting Speaker:** I return to the member from Niagara Centre.

**Mr. Kormos:** Thank you kindly, Speaker. This was a remarkable moment. I can't—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Kormos:** Mr. Tascona interjects.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Tascona:** He named me by my name.

**Mr. Kormos:** My apologies, the member for Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford. He doesn't happen to be in his seat.

In any event, here we are, speaking to a time allocation motion, a jackboots motion, the guillotining of debate.

The Sergeant-at-Arms is working well into the night as well. He's yet another staff person who's going to be headed home at 9:30, 10 o'clock at night. It will maybe take him an hour to get there if he's lucky. By the time he makes his lunch for tomorrow morning, gets the bread and the baloney out and whips up some sandwiches and brown-bags them, he won't be in bed before midnight, then up at 5 again in the morning to get back here to Queen's Park. I'm suspecting that the Liberals may not even debate their own motion here tonight.

Like everybody else, I was back home on the weekend. We were down there, a beautiful stretch of Highway 6. I was down in Welland, Thorold, Pelham and St. Catharines. Saturday morning we were down at the steps of St. Catharines' city hall. We kicked off the commencement of the Niagara Folk Arts Festival. Really, it's St. Catharines, but it calls itself the Niagara Folk Arts Festival. The member for St. Catharines, the Minister of Tourism, was there with me.

I had been down at the Welland market earlier that day. Before that, I'd been over at Merritt Island with the Victorian Order of Nurses, who were having their annual

fundraising run/walk/cycle. You know the VON, the Victorian Order of Nurses, the ones who 50 years ago were visiting my mother when she had the kids that she had after me. Even though she had had more than a few of them before that, the VON was still there at the house taking care of mothers, no charge. It was called public health.

Do you remember what happened to the Victorian Order of Nurses? They got displaced. And then what did we have? We had a former member of this Legislature, a Liberal, appointed to review the process. And after all the whining and pulling of hair and gnashing of teeth by the Liberals when they were in opposition about the dismantlement of the VON and their role in the delivery of home care, what did the Liberals do? It was business as usual.

So I was down there at Merritt Island with those home care workers, the VON, and I did the kickoff of their little walk/cycle/run. I went over to the Welland market and then went up to the St. Catharines' market.

Now what did people tell me in the farmers' markets? What did people tell me? They told me the same things they told you. If you were out and about, and I suspect you were, on Saturday morning, in small and smaller town Ontario, what did people tell you? People told you they've had it up to here. Seniors, retirees, old folks—our folks, our grandfolks, our great grandfolks—told you that there was just an inherent injustice in already well-paid politicians back in December of last year, here at Queen's Park, right here in this chamber, voting themselves a 25%-plus salary increase while they were lucky to see 50 cents on their monthly cheque from the government.

These are folks who have worked hard all of their lives. These are folks who have struggled, who have sacrificed. These are people of whom I've had occasion to tell you, and I'm old enough to have watched it with my own eyes, because I'm not sure, if I hadn't watched it with my own eyes, I would have believed it—and I suspect the member for Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford knows what I'm talking about. I know full well that my colleague from Beaches—East York, Mr. Prue, knows full well what I'm talking about. We're old enough to have watched that postwar generation as they built houses, not by calling in a contractor and having a house built for them; no, they built it with their own hands. Do you remember that, Mr. Prue?

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York):** Absolutely.

**Mr. Kormos:** Do you remember that, Mr. Tascona?

**Mr. Tascona:** Definitely.

**Mr. Kormos:** I remember down on Cameron Avenue in the south end in Crowland—that's where the immigrants lived. My family lived there in those little bungalows. I remember my father building the house himself. I was only two and a half years old, and we lived just up the road. We lived in the basement of this house until we finished the upstairs; it wasn't uncommon at all. There were only three kids at the time, but we lived in the

basement—no bedrooms, just lines drawn on the cement floor.

The old man worked at Atlas Steels. The steel mill is not there anymore, is it? Gone. Atlas Specialty Steels: stainless steel manufacturers, stainless steel rods used in drilling—drill rod. Do you know where mining companies in Canada, Canadian mining companies, have to buy from now? They've got to buy from Sweden, because Atlas Specialty Steels was the only company in North America that made it. You've got governments here at Queen's Park and in Ottawa that let Atlas Steels fold.

When I was a kid, it was like an army of men, dressed in their green dungarees. And it was men. There was the occasional woman. Back then, you see, a working man or working person could make enough so that both parents didn't have to go out and work. Not that their wives didn't work, by any stretch of the imagination, because while my father was out working at Atlas Steels, my mother was organizing the blocks or the brick to be laid that evening when my father got home, and she would help him lay brick. She was the one who took them off the skids and then laid them out along the walls, and that's with little babies. It was not unusual.

I remember in the mid-fifties, when Canada finally opened its door to that great wave of Italian immigration, the young Italian families that came right on Cameron Avenue. Again, they lived in old houses, but it didn't take long before they built new ones.

## 1920

These are the retirees now, you see. It's these folks who worked hard like that who are approaching you and me in the market squares on Saturday mornings saying that it's just not right that the Liberals at Queen's Park vote themselves a 25% salary increase while they have to make do with a 25-cent or 50-cent or buck-a-week increase.

I've told you this before, and I said it to folks this past weekend: When I was a kid, people worried about not living long enough. They did. Now seniors are worrying about living too long because they're afraid that their resources will be depleted before they die. These are proud people who didn't expect to have to endure the status of pauper in their most senior years; proud people who are prepared to live in their own homes, but the governments here at Queen's Park and in Ottawa simply won't let them.

We've got a government here at Queen's Park that delists medical services. It's called the privatization of health care, isn't it? The government here at Queen's Park continues to underfund home care. So you've got seniors, especially seniors living alone—and you know that they tend to be women, because men die before women do; that's just the nature of the longevity rate of people in this country. So you've got elderly women living alone who have to wait for the home care person to come to get bathed. So they wait a day, they wait two days, they wait three days, they wait four days before they can get themselves even something as modest as a



sponge bath. Think about it: not one day's wait; two, three, four days, maybe even more, to get a bath.

That's in your own home. That's when you're not a burden on anybody because you don't want to be. When you struggle to pay the ever-rising taxes—because you've got a government here that has turned its head to the crisis around skyrocketing property taxes here in the province of Ontario. The problem about property tax increases is that they don't discriminate on the basis of how much people earn—that retiree whose fixed income has been eroded by the passage of time, whose pension didn't have a cost of living index that allows it to increase and to respond to increased living costs.

Then we've got the crisis—a crisis. For the life of me—because I was down at the CAW hall on Steele Street on Friday morning. At 3:30 in the afternoon—and Jim Bradley was there too, the Minister of Tourism, the member for St. Catharines; he was up there with me on the panel at 3:30 in the afternoon at the CAW 199 hall on Bunting Road. Packed halls in both instances.

The issue, the theme, was fighting for jobs, fighting for jobs worth fighting for. Between the manufacturing and the resource sector, now we're up to somewhere around 170,000, or maybe even more, jobs lost in the last three years. That's not a blip; that's a crisis with catastrophic consequences, because when you lose those manufacturing jobs, they don't come back. When you lose the high-wage economy, we're then caught in that downward spiral.

Globalization: How do you like it so far? People trusted Liberals. They trusted Liberals in 1993 when the federal Liberal leader, one Mr. Chrétien, promised—“cross my heart and hope to die”—to tear up the free trade deal. What did he do? He not only broke the promise; he brought in NAFTA. More jobs lost. Then we had Jean Chrétien out in British Columbia, looking, gazing over the Pacific Ocean and saying, “Our future is over there, way over there.”

This new economy: I remember there was a member who used to sit right up about there, I can't remember which riding, when Jack Hastings—remember him? He'd come in here and he knew about the new economy. He was lecturing us, hectoring us, about electronic trading. Remember that? I know the member from Mississauga would be interested in this, because this Jack Hastings was touting the electronic trading economy, the virtual retail store. Well, a lot of good that did a whole lot of senior citizens whose brokers invested them in the high-tech investments of that time, because they all took a beating. There's only so many Googles and there's no more value creation work left in this province and in this country, no more wealth creation, no more value-added manufacturing. That's a catastrophe.

As I told folks, you could hear Mr. Premier, Mr. McGuinty, wringing his hands, saying, “I feel your pain. I feel your pain. Oh, I feel your pain.” And he did it again today. He said, “Here we are in this global environment.” Then what the heck was he doing in India, selling off more call centre jobs from Ontario? For the life of me,

I'm not familiar with any big orders being put in down at the Ford plant in St. Thomas where they build those Ford Crown Vics, the Mercury Marquis. I'm not aware of any orders there. I'm not aware of any orders up in Oshawa to buy the Chevy Impala that they build on the Oshawa line. Are you familiar with any orders for that, Mr. Tascona? I'm not familiar with any orders down at the Ford plant in Oakville on the QEW, any pickup trucks or Ford vans. I've got a feeling that the only thing we're going to be exporting to India is our call centre jobs. Oh, yes, and perhaps more than a few of our high-tech jobs. So they're going. We are in deep, deep trouble. My concern is that the Liberals, like Nero, simply fiddle. Oh, they've covered their own butts. That 25% salary increase will go quite a ways. But as for the rest of them, what was it that Ms. Antoinette told them? “Let them eat cake.” So we've got a Premier in one of those big powdered wigs, three feet high, with bejewelled fingers, saying to the working folks—well, the formerly working folks—of Ontario, “Let them eat cake.”

By the way, I'm not supporting this time allocation motion.

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** I'm pleased to speak on third reading of Bill 69 that my colleague the Honourable Steve Peters, Minister of Labour, has introduced, better known as the Regulatory Modernization Act, 2007. But before I speak on the merits of the bill, I wanted to clarify a few items, if I may.

The member from Leeds–Grenville spoke about time limitation, yet he spent most of his time talking about what his government did when they were in power. He also made a statement which is incorrect, and that is that he suggested this bill would create super-inspectors. If the member from Leeds–Grenville would have spoken with the member from Niagara Centre, he could have told him that in fact this issue was clarified when the people of Ontario had an opportunity to speak to us at committee. There is no such thing; there is no super-inspector. What we have are inspectors who are well qualified and well educated, and this government wants to keep them that way. There is no plan whatsoever for what people call super-inspectors.

**1930**

Having said that, let me speak on the merits of this bill. This proposed legislation is a perfect example of how the McGuinty government is improving the way government works. This proposed legislation is also an excellent example of how the McGuinty government is on the side of small business and entrepreneurs. We have met with and listened to dozens of small business owners and associations in Ontario, and they have told us that for them to grow and prosper, we need to provide them with better tools to help them comply with Ontario's law.

As my colleague Minister Peters has said previously, there are 13 provincial ministries responsible for regulatory compliance activities, and some businesses are regulated by as many as seven or eight different ministries. The small business owners don't necessarily have an issue with regulations. They know regulation is ab-



olutely important and necessary to ensure safe operations; for example, to ensure that the health and safety of their staff and the public is protected. But these businesses want us to know and understand the challenges they are faced with. They have told us that they provide some of the same types of information over and over again to various government officials, and they want us to put a stop to that. For example, some auto body repair shop owners may be required to complete around 70 different forms that pertain to their business. They have told us that they have difficulties in finding the right information on legislation that affects their businesses. They have told us that they are having trouble keeping up with all these questions, and they want to follow the rules and understand their regulatory obligations.

In addition, recently released reports on food safety and clean water have clearly pointed out the need for greater co-operation among government ministries and agencies. That is why we have begun an extensive modernization process which is designed to help small businesses in their efforts to comply with our laws.

Now, Bill 69 is a key part of that process. Among other things, Bill 69 is about more co-operation among ministries and agencies in order to help businesses meet their compliance requirements, and it is about easing burdens placed on companies and reducing duplication of ministry compliance activities. We are removing challenges to doing business. Why? It is because improved communication means less duplication, and less duplication means less headaches for businesses. This can only help contribute to a successful, vibrant economy.

The bottom line is, this bill makes sense. It makes sense for Ontario business and it makes sense for the Ontario public.

I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for listening to the reasons why Bill 69 has merit, and I certainly appreciate the support of everyone in the House. At the committee level we had strong support from the members, and I trust the same will happen tonight.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean—Carleton):** It's a pleasure to join the debate tonight.

For the honourable House leader for the government, I just want to say one thing: Go, Sens, go. We've got one more game left, and I know my colleague from Ottawa—Vanier over there—well, actually, everybody in the Legislature is giving me the thumbs-up right now, because we know the Senators are going to sweep this: four games. Four games and the poor Sabres are going to be out.

In any event, I want to talk a little bit about time allocation. As you know, I'm a new member. I'm one of the youngest here. One of the things I find with the entire system, whether it's Liberal, Conservative, or New Democratic, that's disillusioning is the amount of time wasted in this chamber on things that are irrelevant to the public. I think it's disillusioning.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. MacLeod:** Thank you very much to the honourable member from St. Catharines. But there's one thing that we could be doing here—and I'm not going to speak

to the bill, because I necessarily do not have to, based on the standing orders, and we talked a little bit about those. I actually think the standing orders need to be refined in this place, and we have to look at a model where we're using the time that's necessary to have public debate on issues that are actually relevant to the constituents who sent us here. Time and time again we find that we're talking—the member from Leeds—Grenville referred to the issue of standing up on a point of order to welcome people in the gallery. I've been here at times when it's been half an hour to an hour before question period even begins.

As a young member who has a young family, I would like to be using that time for debate on bills rather than sitting here in the evening, so I could be home with my child. That's not a partisan issue. That's just a real, family issue. This place needs to become more family-friendly. If we want to attract more women, which each political party has said they want to do—and this is a national issue, it's not even just a provincial issue—you have to make this place a little bit more attractive. We need a daycare, for example, on the premises to meet the unique needs of the members here, whether they're male or female, who have young families and are travelling five hours, in my case, or an hour in other cases. I think that we need to make this place more family-friendly, make it move more smoothly. We hear that consistently on all three sides of the Legislature. We need to work together to make the change that's positive for not only the way we work here, but for our constituents who are debating relevant issues.

Tonight we're debating, for 51 minutes per political party, time allocation, a motion we should just be voting on.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. MacLeod:** I'm not quite sure what the member opposite is saying, but if I'm going to be delegated an opportunity to speak, I'm going to speak about something that's relevant to me and to my generation and the people I represent.

I think they would much rather I be here tonight talking about some of the key issues that are important to them, which are health care and education. But, no, we're talking about a time allocation motion. I could actually stand here tonight, I'm sure, and fill up my time talking about what stakeholder said what about the legislation or maybe throw a few quotes back at government members who opposed time allocation when my party was in power and when I wasn't a member. But I don't think that's relevant.

What I think is relevant, and what I hope the members here will take away, particularly members who can influence change at the Board of Internal Economy, those being the government members, is to make some of the systemic changes that will make this place flow a little bit better. That means refining the standing orders so that we're debating things that are actually relevant in this chamber; so that question period actually starts at 2 o'clock, like it does in the federal Parliament and it goes



for an hour so there is an ability for our constituents to tune in and it's a predictable time. It's consistent—consistency. Each and every day they know they're going to be able to watch their members of provincial Parliament debate the issues of the day.

Furthermore, I think we have to look at making this place a little bit more family-friendly so that when the Minister of the Environment, the member for Nepean—Carleton and the member from Stoney Creek decide that they want to take their kids for lunch in the parliamentary dining room or in the cafeteria, it's actually a welcoming place for us.

I just wanted to add that, again, it's a disillusioning thing to see time allocation. We should be devoting our time to debating the relevant issues of the day. With that, I think I'll conclude my remarks. I hope that we move speedily along and we debate issues that are of the utmost importance to the people we represent.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate.

**Mr. Prue:** Speaker, thank you for the opportunity of debating here tonight.

Yesterday, when I found out that I had House duty and that I had to come here tonight and what the bill was, Bill 69, I was somewhat puzzled, of course, because this is an ancient bill. We're up into the 100s and the 200s now, and I wondered, what kind of bill is this? So I asked the intern in my office to please try to find Bill 69 on the website. Try as hard as she might, and she is a brilliant woman, she could not find it on the website. Of course, I had to come here and dig underneath the desk in the old-fashioned way to find out exactly what Bill 69 was, because it has been around here for a long, long time. It was introduced on first reading on February 27, 2006, some 17 months ago, and had second reading—this is the snail's pace at which this bill has moved—on November 20, 2006. It went to committee, and it's back here. This bill is a long time in the making.

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So I had to stop and think, "Why is the government invoking closure on a bill that has moved at a snail's pace since its introduction?" This is a bill that obviously did not capture the imagination of this government. They obviously did not really care, until a day or two ago, whether this bill ever saw the light of day, and all of a sudden it became so important that everything had to stop, closure had to be invoked, no one could speak to it. It was a matter of the utmost urgency that the bill pass, literally within days.

I've looked at this bill, and I've tried to contrast it with other bills that have had speedy passage through this House and other bills that are more like it, that have languished on the order paper, and tried to figure out what was so special that the government House leader and all the members opposite would invoke closure. What is it about this bill? What's contained in the body of this bill that makes you all want to see it passed in such an expeditious fashion so that ordinary members, people in the opposition, even yourselves, have limited or no opportunity to debate it?

I am reminded—and my colleague from Niagara Centre spoke about this briefly—of the speed with which some bills go through this Legislature. The fastest bill I ever saw passed other than the firefighters, which I was proud to vote for a couple of days ago, was the one on our own wages. It took eight days. It was a contentious bill; there were people speaking against it. It passed in eight days because the government wanted the bill to pass. They wanted the bill to pass, and they pulled out all the parliamentary stops to make sure that it happened. Sure enough, eight days later, there was a bill—first, second and third reading. The Lieutenant Governor signed it into law, and everything was done before Christmas.

There's a bill that the government really wanted to pass, whatever their reason was. Contrast this with this bill, which has languished on the order paper for 18 months, suddenly to be the subject of closure.

I had to look at this. What made this so important? I went through the bill, as I said. We couldn't find anything, really; because it was so ancient, it was hard to find it. We could find a few references in Hansard when we went back to February 2006, when the bill was introduced. We found a few more references when it was debated at second reading in the House, but I don't think it got very far in the House, because I do note that the lead speaker for the New Democratic Party was the member for Niagara Centre. He was halfway through his lead speech when we stopped debating this bill. So I know that it had only one or two days, maximum, of people talking about what the contents were and perhaps, I guess, how important it was to pass it, and all of a sudden it was sent off to committee, where it languished for a while, and it has been resurrected here tonight.

So what is in this bill that makes it so important? I tried to read some of the sections. Section 10 was kind of fun. Section 10, just for the edification of those who are listening in the Legislature and watching on television, says that it's the collection of "Statistical information about an organization and the sector or industry in which the organization operates." It goes on to talk about licensing and permitting and how that can be denied if people don't give the information out. It talks about complaints filed in respect of an organization; information compiled in connection with an examination, a test or an audit; information related to an organization's compliance with the designated legislation; and information about convictions and penalties. That, I think, is the operative section. That's what the bill is all about. I don't know whether the earth would collapse, I don't know whether the business of Ontario or of Canada would suddenly stop if this bill was not passed, but obviously it means a great deal to the government since they've invoked closure and won't even allow debate on its contents.

I looked some more in total fascination at sections 16 and 17, which I found to be surprising, given that this is of such an urgent matter that we have to invoke closure. Section 16 says, "A person acting under this act is not a compellable witness in a civil proceeding before a court or tribunal respecting any information collected, used or



disclosed....” So even if somebody under the authority of this act collects the information, they can’t even give that information in court. I don’t know. It’s really important that we pass this. It’s so important that the person who collects the information under this statute is not even a compellable witness.

I went on to look at section 17, which made it even worse: “A person acting under this act is not required to produce, in a civil proceeding before a court or tribunal, information collected, used or disclosed under this act.” Here we give authority to a whole bunch of people to get information about organizations, about licences, about everything else, and they’re not even compellable witnesses if somebody wants to find out what they found out. I don’t know. I thought, “Well, this is pretty strange. Why would a government invoke closure about a law that virtually does nothing, a law that does not even compel a witness to tell what they know, but is so important to this government that it has to act on it with dispatch?”

I turned to part V, which is really the interesting part of this act. I don’t know who writes this stuff. Perhaps some day I can meet some of the bureaucrats who write all this stuff. Perhaps it’s hidden here in the consequential amendments what is causing this government such grief and is causing this government to act with such dispatch that they have to go against the fundamentals of this Legislature and of the Parliament of Canada and stop all debate and ram this through.

I looked at some of the things. The Athletics Control Act is mentioned here. I read this, and it doesn’t mean anything to me. I looked in here at some of the other things: the Bailiffs Act; the Cemeteries Act (Revised); the Collection Agencies Act; the Consumer Reporting Act; the Environmental Protection Act; the Funeral Directors and Establishments Act. Just to give an example—and I’m just going to pick one at random. This is the kind of stuff that’s in here, and maybe there’s some secret here that has seized this government. Let’s just pick this one:

“Subsection 48(1) of the Funeral Directors and Establishments Act is amended by adding the following clause:

“(a.1) as authorized under the Regulatory Modernization Act, 2007....”

That’s what’s there, and that’s what’s through all of these consequential amendments. I have to wonder what is seizing this government to want to invoke closure.

I remember the heady debates of the past. I remember when the government House leader, when he sat on this side, was probably the leading authority and the leading protagonist speaking against the government of the day in the invoking of closure. I cannot try to emulate his speeches, because they were so well written and so passionate and so well intentioned in those days. Yet it is the same government House leader that—perhaps he can tell us at some point what is so special about this act that we have to go against a parliamentary tradition that is 750 years old in which Parliament speaks out the bill. What is so important that closure has to be invoked? Is

there some national consequence here? Or is it the government’s own agenda?

That’s where I’d like to really conclude: It has to be in the government’s own agenda. They must want out of this place so badly, they must want to be gone from this place in such a hurry that they are willing to invoke closure on a bill that is so inconsequential as the one we have before us. I do not know what goes on in the House leaders’ meetings; I am not privy to them. But I would hazard a guess that this causes no great consternation to any member of this House, to any party in this House, and that in fact the reason this has been invoked is that the government simply does not want to be here. They do not want to be here for question periods, when they tend to be roughed up just a little, and they do not want to be here for the hurly-burly of the debate. In fact, I do not believe they want to be here at all. It is probably in their best interest to be out on the hustings, to be handing out cheques willy-nilly, here and there, to assorted and sundry agencies and groups that are more than happy and eager to take those cheques and to be photographed with politicians. I would suggest that that is where they would rather be.

**1950**

Here we have a bill that, I’m sure, whether it passes or not, is going to make any great consequence to the people of Ontario, but it does, sadly, have a great consequence to this institution and to this Legislature. The more that governments invoke closure—and it can be governments of any stripe—the less and less relevant this Legislature becomes; the more they shut down debate and do not want to hear the ideas of the opposition, the more the decisions get made in the backrooms, whether it be the Premier’s office or, increasingly rarely, around the cabinet table. That is what this has all come down to. It is a sad day to have closure invoked on such a—I would categorize it as almost a pitiful and meaningless—bill, but the government has decided to do that for their own reasons.

Perhaps one day, in the fulsome measure of time, one of the members of cabinet can indicate to me why it was necessary to invoke closure on such a bill as this—which is obviously not that contentious, which obviously does not affect anything in any great way in this province—maybe perhaps to tell me if I am wrong in the assumption that it is merely to try to get out of here with all dispatch.

**Mr. Tascona:** I want to speak briefly on this time allocation motion, which is shutting down debate here tonight with respect to Bill 69, which is intended to allow the Ministry of Labour to more effectively try to do its job.

What I want to say is that it’s kind of ironic in terms of their—they put together this legislation and at the same time they’re reducing money in the operation of the Ministry of Labour. They’ve shut down the office in Barrie of the Ministry of Labour, which is hard to believe, considering it’s such a major growth centre in this province. They shut down the Ministry of Labour office in Barrie, effective last week. It’s quite shocking that they would do that, because that means that everybody who has labour problems and whatever is going to have



to go elsewhere, whether it's Newmarket, Mississauga or Toronto. Here we are debating a bill that's supposed to make the Ministry of Labour more efficient, and they are shutting down offices in major centres.

We've been dealing with a number of issues in this Legislature. My friend from Leeds–Grenville talked about the Liberal slush fund. That has been taking up question period for the last month in trying to get some real answers to an issue that has permeated this government in terms of the way it does business in a way that isn't in the interests of taxpayers and accountability in terms of what we're trying to accomplish here for the public.

I want to say that here we are going into a long weekend. I'm anticipating, as most people are, gas prices being jacked up—the way that it's going to impact the consumers. Certainly we need to take measures to make sure that the public is not continually jacked up with respect to prices coming in without notice and taking advantage of consumers. At least in my riding—I know other ridings, the member for Whitby–Ajax, Christine Elliott—people commute; they have to come in here. The price of gasoline—I pumped up today at around \$1.09 in Barrie. The price back in January was 77 cents. Here we are facing a massive increase in gasoline prices and the government is doing nothing about it, allowing this to happen. As my friend from Niagara Centre talked earlier about the lost jobs in this economy, we're going to see even more lost jobs because of the reckless energy policies of this government.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby–Ajax):** I appreciate the opportunity to make a few remarks with respect to the time allocation motion on Bill 69, the Regulatory Modernization Act. Just to add to some of the comments that have been made by the previous speakers, it is somewhat curious that this, being a bill that was introduced in February 2006, is now the subject of a time allocation motion. This, of course, is happening with increasing regularity in this Legislature as virtually every important bill that we have been faced with in the last few months has been time-allocated, commencing with the budget bill, the electoral reform bill, which in itself is almost incomprehensible—when you're dealing with democratic electoral reform, to time-allocate it is really beyond the pale—the Endangered Species Act, and I understand that Bill 140, the long-term-care bill, is also going to be time-allocated, and now of course we have Bill 69, the Regulatory Modernization Act.

I'm all for efficiency, reducing waste and making sure that time is well spent here in this Legislature, but certainly not at the expense of careful, reasoned debate on a piece of legislation and also not for the expense of political optics so that this government can be seen to be doing something in advance of the election and to be able to escape the Legislature as soon as possible so as not to be faced with question period every day.

I would say that this particular act does deal with the amendment of approximately 20 other different acts. It makes changes across the board, but the basic scope of it of course is to allow for the exchange of information

between different regulatory inspectors to make sure that if they detect an infraction in one area while they're inspecting something else, they will be able to make that connection and have that inspected by the other agencies.

It is valid in its purpose, but again, as the member from Beaches–East York mentioned, it's kind of curious that this bill is being presented now on a time allocation basis. One certainly wonders what the purpose is behind this. I suspect it has a lot more to do with the election coming up in October than anything else.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to add a few comments.

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number 372. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1957 to 2007.*

**The Acting Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time to be counted by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Jeffrey, Linda	Oraziotti, David
Bentley, Christopher	Kular, Kuldip	Parsons, Ernie
Bradley, James J.	Leal, Jeff	Qaadri, Shafiq
Brownell, Jim	Levac, Dave	Racco, Mario G.
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Matthews, Deborah	Ramal, Khalil
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Sandals, Liz
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Sergio, Mario
Dombrowsky, Leona	Milloy, John	Smith, Monique
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Mitchell, Carol	Van Bommel, Maria
Hoy, Pat	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wilkinson, John

**The Acting Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be counted by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Barrett, Toby	MacLeod, Lisa	Runciman, Robert W.
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norm	Tascona, Joseph N.
Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 30; the nays are 8.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Orders of the day.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** As the opposition has on numerous occasions, I move none other than—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I'm just waiting to hear some advice. I'm going to move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr. Bradley has moved adjournment of the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

*The House adjourned at 2010.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	<b>Brown, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (L)</b> Speaker / Président	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Scott, Laurie (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b> Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	Horwath, Andrea (ND)
Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton Mountain	<b>Bountrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie (L)</b> Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Kular, Kuldip (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	Marsales, Judy (L)
Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b> Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Huron-Bruce	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b> Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Burlington	Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Milloy, John (L)
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (L)</b> Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tory, John (PC) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	London West / London-Ouest	<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L)</b> Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Ramal, Khalil (L)
Eglinton-Lawrence	<b>Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (L)</b> Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration	Markham	<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L)</b> Minister of Revenue / ministre du Revenu
Elgin-Middlesex-London	<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)</b> Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)</b> Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship / ministre des Petites Entreprises et de l'Entrepreneuriat
Erie-Lincoln Essex	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Fonseca, Peter (L)
Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b> Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Peterson, Tim (Ind.)
Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L)</b> Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Delaney, Bob (L)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Nepean-Carleton	MacLeod, Lisa (PC)
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b> Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)
Guelph-Wellington	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Niagara Falls	Craiton, Kim (L)
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Sandals, Liz (L)	Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)
	Barrett, Toby (PC)	Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)



Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Stormont–Dundas– Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick</b> (L) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)		
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton</b> (L) Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior- Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim</b> (L) Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé	Timiskaming–Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David</b> (L) Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa–Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)		Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Ottawa–Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine</b> (L) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George</b> (L) Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / vice-premier ministre, ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	Tabuns, Peter (ND)
Parkdale–High Park	DiNovo, Cheri (ND)		Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Parry Sound–Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Toronto–Danforth	<b>Sorbara, Hon. / L'hon. Greg</b> (L) Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Perth–Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Trinity–Spadina	<b>Arnott, Ted</b> (PC) First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)	Vaughan–King–Aurora	Elliott, Christine (PC)
Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)		Zimmer, David (L)
Prince Edward–Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Waterloo–Wellington	<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra</b> (L) Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Yakabuski, John (PC)		<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight</b> (L) Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie
Samia–Lambton	<b>Di Cocco, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline</b> (L) Minister of Culture / ministre de la Culture	Whitby–Ajax	<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte</b> (L) Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	Willowdale	Munro, Julia (PC)
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Ferreira, Paul (ND)
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V.</b> (L) Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse		Sergio, Mario (L)
Scarborough Southwest Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)	Windsor–St. Clair	
Scarborough–Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry</b> (L) Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux	York Centre / York-Centre	
Scarborough–Rouge River	Balkissoon, Bas (L)		
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	York North / York-Nord	
Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
St. Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J.</b> (L) Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, government House leader / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées, leader parlementaire du gouvernement	York West / York-Ouest	
St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael</b> (L) Attorney General / procureur général		
Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

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Ernie Parsons, Khalil Ramal  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day



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of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
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Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 16 May 2007**

**Mercredi 16 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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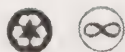
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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 16 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 16 mai 2007

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):**

The illegal occupation of land in Caledonia is now into its 441st day, with no resolution in sight. The McGuinty government has spent untold thousands of tax dollars in smokescreen negotiating efforts by former Liberal politicians for a no-result performance.

Last week, following the suggestion of my colleague the MPP for Leeds–Grenville, the government finally appointed someone with professional mediation credentials. But, alas, mediations will be to no avail. The McGuinty government knows that acceptance of the occupiers' demands will cause outrage and, like so many other hot-potato issues, a deal—more likely, a caving in—will not occur until after the provincial election.

Now the Premier has suggested that native land claims should be negotiated and settled by a third party. That is a total abdication of the government's responsibility. As we've said before, when the going gets tough, he ducks.

The McGuinty government's failure to deal effectively with the challenges of Caledonia and uphold the rule of law has not only cost the taxpayers of Ontario millions of dollars and created a living hell for many Caledonians, it has also emboldened others to carry out similar acts and to threaten more to come. Mr. McGuinty's efforts to deflect responsibility for the Caledonia mess, and other actions it may foster, will not sell. We all know who is responsible, and his first name is Dalton.

### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** I rise today to acknowledge a tremendous effort from two individuals who are from my riding of Mississauga East. They have taken advantage of the democratic process in raising an important concern to their elected official. Out of cause for concern, Angela Shaw and Julie Curitti, both of whom are registered nurses and sit on the Cawthra Gardens Family Council, worked with the support of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, the Dietitians of Canada, CARP and the food service managers at the Cawthra Gardens facility to start a petition campaign.

I'm proud to announce that Angela and Julie, in concert with the other organizations and five additional people who are with us here today—Linda Dietrich, Leslie Carter, Wendy Fucile, Norma Nicholson and Tina Ottawa—worked on this petition and have managed to get over 19,000 signatures. I will be reading the petition and tabling the signatures this afternoon. This initiative, undertaken by Angela and Julie, is an example of individuals caring for the needs of seniors, knowing that seniors deserve the best of care.

I'm proud the McGuinty government has made much progress for the betterment of seniors in long-term-care homes. The group undertook this campaign because they want to improve the lives of seniors who live in long-term-care homes. The care of senior members of our society means so much to each and every one of us, because everyone is a senior in their lives and we all want what is best for them.

### WATER QUALITY

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** I rise today to recognize the excellent work and commitment to water supply and safety by the members of the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association. I would also like to note that Dalton McGuinty and his Minister of the Environment have completely disregarded questions and statements, and refused to respond to their own Watertight report on water and waste water infrastructure or to draft regulations on the Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act. Last year alone I brought this to the minister in April, June, October and November; not one response.

May 19 represents the seventh anniversary of the tragedy in Walkerton, and as stated in a press release from the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association, "In spite of an exhaustive inquiry into the tragedy and a detailed report by Justice O'Connor, the McGuinty government has not acted on the recommendations regarding the aging and neglected system of watermains and sewer pipes throughout the province." To date, there has been no plan articulated by the Minister of the Environment or the McGuinty government to address the key action items in the Walkerton report regarding piping infrastructure.

What we do know is that Dalton McGuinty and the Minister of the Environment continue to use the people of Walkerton as nothing more than a political football. What they refer to as action is a direct defiance of Justice



O'Connor's report by effectively downloading the cost and liabilities of their legislation onto municipalities and rural communities and creating another level of bureaucracy in order to do it. It's time for action. It's time for leadership and not more broken promises.

#### MUSEUM STRATHROY-CARADOC

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):** I'm proud to announce today that on May 24, the municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc will be making history and will do so by celebrating the past. Museum Strathroy-Caradoc, completed in February of this year, will celebrate the official grand opening of its new state-of-the-art exhibition and storage facility. Home to over 20,000 community artefacts, the storage facility and its dynamic exhibition centre have found extraordinary success. Indeed, within the first three months of its opening, the museum, in partnership with the Royal Ontario Museum, drew over 6,000 visitors.

A grand opening of the museum will be celebrated with live music, historical demonstrations, tours and a new exhibition called Rural Roots. It will speak to the rich history that has seen the transformation of a small settlement into the present-day thriving rural community that it is, a history shared with many communities that hold the farm at their centre. It's expected that curators and enthusiasts from across the province will attend the grand opening.

May 24 will mark the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Strathroy-Caradoc. It signals the commitment of this municipality and the province to the commemoration of our history and its preservation for posterity. Most significantly, it ensures that the story of rural communities like Strathroy-Caradoc will remain alive for their residents, as well as making a wonderful discovery for our visitors. I commend and recommend to everyone the discovery story of Museum Strathroy-Caradoc, and I suggest that we all visit the new facility or at least try to do so by visiting it online.

#### WINDSOR BRIDGE

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I rise in the House today because of the McGuinty government's lack of action on the Windsor border access point. Members would know that the Windsor-Detroit border is the busiest international border in North America. In fact, over \$1.5 billion a year transfers through that border. Ten thousand trucks per day, 33,000 cars per day—this is an essential component of the very economy of Ontario. Quite frankly, needed improvement to crossing at the border will help address the gridlock in the community and emission issues with respect to traffic idling. But we have seen no plan from the McGuinty government, no plan whatsoever.

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In fact, I'm very surprised that a minister from the area, Dwight Duncan, has said, on March 12, "We"—the

Ontario government—"rejected the nine-point plan and the Detroit River tunnel...." The other minister, Sandra Pupatello, the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, from Windsor West, is completely missing on the topic, or in fact is working behind the scenes. And that's part of the suggestion here.

Quite frankly, if you look at the local government people there in the area, the local communities of Leamington, Amherstburg, LaSalle, Tecumseh, Essex, the city of Windsor—in fact, Mayor Eddie Francis—support the tunnel solution. There's no plan—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Members' statements?

#### MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** I am happy today to rise to talk about a fantastic celebration that takes place nearly every year in my community in the riding of Beaches-East York. The East York Day multicultural festival will be Sunday, June 3, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the East York Community Centre.

This is a great opportunity for the people of East York, and we take it every year to celebrate our combined heritage, whether it is the heritage of the older community that has lived there for a long time or those newcomers who have chosen to settle in East York. It is an opportunity for them to learn about each other and to join in the local service groups and associations, such as the Leaside Lions Club, Meals on Wheels, Community Care East York and the East York Choir. They are all there to celebrate all things East York.

This festival also gives local businesses a great opportunity to display their goods, their services and get to know the community, and the community to know them. Of course there will be, as always, amazing international food to sample, a silent auction, performances by various multicultural groups; the Cypriot folk dance group will be there this year as well as the Hawaiian cultural group, because we do have Hawaiians in East York.

This festival represents 29 years—I would like to thank one particular individual in person. That is Mihir Ghosh, the president, who has kept this festival going. In spite of amalgamation and the many things that have happened to East York, we continue to celebrate who and what we are.

#### STAAL FAMILY

**Mr. Bill Mauro (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** I rise today to salute two of Thunder Bay's finest, Eric and Jordan Staal, who helped lead Canada to a record 24th world hockey championship this past Sunday in Moscow, the first time Canada has gone unbeaten and untied in the tournament since 1937. For Eric, the Carolina Hurricanes star forward, it added another championship to his accomplishments that include the 2006 Stanley Cup. For Jordan, the Pittsburgh Penguins teenage star nominated for the Calder Memorial Trophy as the NHL's top rookie

this season, it was his first gold medal at a world tournament.

We also have to remember the contributions of their parents, Linda and Henry Staal of Thunder Bay, who were responsible for the family outdoor games that have become part of Canadian hockey lore. Henry constructed a rink close to regulation size on his 500-acre sod farm near Thunder Bay. His four sons and a cousin would play all night long, thanks to the lights Henry installed.

There are more Staals on the way. Marc Staal is a first-round draft choice of the Rangers who won two gold medals as a member of Canada's world junior team. He was just voted to the OHL all-star team and voted as the league's top defenceman. Jared Staal will be eligible for the NHL draft in 2008. Both played big parts in the Sudbury Wolves' playoff success that led them to the OHL finals.

Congratulations to all of the members of Team Canada who made the decision to go overseas to represent their country after a very long regular season. And special congratulations to Shane Doan, the captain of Team Canada, and Bob Nicholson, president of Hockey Canada, who led our team with the dignity and style we have come to expect from our Canadian players and administrators.

#### MAY DAY FESTIVAL

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** Earlier this year, I was approached by Community Living York South, a non-profit organization which supports individuals with intellectual disabilities to live, learn, work and participate in the community. They had a vision of a celebration that would reflect the rich diversity within our community, complete with a variety of cuisines, performances and educational displays.

On Saturday, May 5, after months of planning and organization, the May Day festival became a reality. Five celebrations occurred simultaneously throughout the region of York, in Stouffville, Richmond Hill, Markham, Vaughan and the central location in my riding of Thornhill.

The festival was a resounding success. Situated in the lush surroundings of Adventure Valley in Thornhill, hundreds of individuals reflecting a variety of abilities, cultures and ethnicities came to enjoy the May Day festival, which included both indoor and outdoor attractions. Those who came with their families and friends were able to meet and interact with new people in an inclusive community environment.

May Day features a variety of Spanish, Indian and Chinese cuisine, as well as several performances, including a Chinese lotus dance, a traditional Hindu dance and a poetry reading.

I would like to thank Ritu Bhasin and Brenda Crouse of Community Living York South for all their efforts, as well as Chief Armand La Barge and Sergeants Paul Chiang and Ricky Veerappan of the York Regional Police, Councillor Sandra Racco from Vaughan and,

finally, Lynda Fishman, owner of Adventure Valley, for allowing us to use her beautiful facility.

#### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** I rise in the House today to talk about the issue of gas prices and the McGuinty government's commitment to giving Ontarians the tools to buffer themselves against higher gas prices.

The NDP has been doing a lot of talking about gas prices, but when they had the chance to make a difference, the member for Kenora-Rainy River and his party hiked the gas price by over 30% when they were in office. The NDP are now calling for regulated gas prices. But do the NDP even know what the price of gas is in regulated areas? Be careful what you ask for. In unregulated Toronto, the price of gas is \$1.07 per litre; however, in regulated Halifax it is \$1.15; in regulated Montreal, it is \$1.18; in regulated St. John's, it is a whopping \$1.20.

The McGuinty government has been working hard to help Ontarians deal with this issue. We've doubled the Ontario sales tax rebate for hybrid electric vehicles to \$2,000. Municipalities will receive two cents of the existing gas tax for public transit, while it will mean over \$300 million every year across this province. We are also asking the federal government to keep a close eye on the issue to address ongoing allegations about gas gouging.

The Ontario gas tax remains consistent at 14.7 cents per litre, even when gas prices go up, but the federal GST changes with the price, which gives the federal government an added incentive not to do anything on this. We will keep moving forward. We ask the federal government to do the same.

#### VISITORS

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South-Weston):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to welcome this afternoon to the House a group of approximately 30 grade 5 and 6 students from Lambton Park Community School in my riding. Welcome. Enjoy the show, guys.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE POLICY

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on justice policy and move its adoption.

**The Acting Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 198, An Act to amend the Ontario Water Resources Act to safeguard and sustain Ontario's water, to



make related amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 and to repeal the Water Transfer Control Act / *Projet de loi 198, Loi visant à modifier la Loi sur les ressources en eau de l'Ontario afin d'assurer la sauvegarde et la durabilité des eaux de l'Ontario, à apporter des modifications connexes à la Loi de 2002 sur la salubrité de l'eau potable et à abroger la Loi sur le contrôle des transferts d'eau.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated Tuesday, April 24, 2007, the bill is ordered for third reading.

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated May 16, 2007, of the standing committee on government agencies. Pursuant to standing order 106(e)9, the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

1350

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT (MILITARY SERVICE LEAVE), 2007 LOI DE 2007 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES NORMES D'EMPLOI (CONGÉ POUR SERVICE MILITAIRE)

Mr. Martiniuk moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 226, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 with respect to military leave / *Projet de loi 226, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui a trait au congé militaire.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** I'm pleased to introduce my private member's bill that protects reserve soldiers' civilian jobs. This bill would amend the Employment Standards Act in order to protect the civilian jobs of Canadian Forces reservists who volunteer for active service. Upon their return to their civilian jobs, reservists would receive the same salary, benefits and seniority status they would have attained had they remained in their civilian employment. While Canadian employers are encouraged to adopt policies concerning leave for military service, there is no legislation in Ontario that offers job protection to reservists willing to commit to a tour of duty.

The Canadian Forces currently has a reserve force of 25,000 members. I ask all of you in the Legislature to

support my private member's bill and offer a measure of job security to the members of the Canadian reserve forces. It is time that Canadian reservists' contributions to world peace are recognized by the people of Ontario.

##### JACK MINER MIGRATORY BIRD FOUNDATION REPEAL ACT, 2007

##### LOI DE 2007 ABROGEANT LA LOI INTITULÉE JACK MINER

##### MIGRATORY BIRD FOUNDATION ACT

Mr. Crozier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 227, An Act to repeal The Jack Miner Migratory Bird Foundation Act, 1936 / *Projet de loi 227, Loi abrogeant la loi intitulée The Jack Miner Migratory Bird Foundation Act, 1936.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** As I've just pointed out, the Jack Miner Migratory Bird Foundation was created in 1936 by a public bill. The Canada Revenue Agency has asked that they restructure their board of directors. The simplest way to do this is—they have now done that under the Corporations Act, and this private member's public bill merely repeals the original act.

##### MADRESA ASHRAFUL ULOOM ACT, 2007

Mr. Qaadri moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr35, An Act respecting Madresa Ashraful Uloom.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

#### MOTIONS

##### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I have a very popular motion. I move that, notwithstanding any other order of the House, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 16, 2007, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion 356. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1355 to 1400.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

Balkissoon, Bas	Duncan, Dwight	Phillips, Gerry
Bartolucci, Rick	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Pupatello, Sandra
Bentley, Christopher	Fonseca, Peter	Qaadri, Shafiq
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Gerretsen, John	Racco, Mario G.
Bountrogianni, Marie	Hoy, Pat	Ramal, Khalil
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Ruprecht, Tony
Broten, Laurel C.	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Cansfield, Donna H.	Levac, Dave	Smith, Monique
Caplan, David	Matthews, Deborah	Smitherman, George
Chan, Michael	Mauro, Bill	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Di Cocco, Caroline	Parsons, Ernie	Wilkinson, John
Dombrowsky, Leona	Patten, Richard	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duguid, Brad	Peters, Steve	Zimmer, David

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**Nays**

Arnott, Ted	Kormos, Peter	O'Toole, John
Bisson, Gilles	MacLeod, Lisa	Prue, Michael
Chudleigh, Ted	Marchese, Rosario	Runciman, Robert W.
Elliott, Christine	Martel, Shelley	Scott, Laurie
Ferreira, Paul	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tascona, Joseph N.
Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Norm	Tory, John
Klees, Frank	Munro, Julia	Yakubuski, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 48; the nays are 21.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK

#### L'ANAPHYLAXIE

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** Ensuring the safety and well-being of children in our schools is a priority of this government.

Nous voulons nous assurer que tous les élèves sont en sécurité, en santé et en mesure de se concentrer sur leurs études.

As part of an overall healthier schools strategy to assist the development of healthier lifestyle habits in our young people, our government has directed school boards to provide elementary students with 20 minutes of physical activity; banned junk food from elementary school vending machines and replaced them with healthier food and beverage choices; issued a challenge to schools to do at least one more thing to make their schools healthier, and I'm pleased to note that 1,200 schools took up our challenge; and made our schools more accessible to community groups, and we have supported the Lifesaving Society's swim to survive program.

Additionally, last year our government enacted a law requiring every school board in the province to establish and maintain an anaphylaxis policy.

"Anaphylaxis" is the term given to an allergic reaction that can be life threatening. According to Anaphylaxis Canada, approximately 1% to 2% of Canadians are at risk of having an anaphylactic reaction. That means up to 42,000 students in Ontario schools could experience life-threatening allergic reactions. Although food is the most common cause of anaphylaxis, insect stings, medicine and even latex can also cause a severe reaction.

The McGuinty government recognizes that anaphylaxis is a serious matter. Dealing with anaphylaxis requires having clear avoidance strategies in place and immediate response in the event of an emergency. Today, Mr. Speaker, I want to draw your attention to what our government is doing to protect all students.

The Legislature unanimously passed Sabrina's Law, which came into force on January 1, 2006. I would just like to take this opportunity to introduce Sara Shannon, Sabrina's mother, who is with us today in the gallery. She will be joined by Kathleen Whelan, Mary Shea and Marilyn Allen, all of whom have made the drive from Pembroke to be with us today.

This legislation was the first legislation of its kind anywhere in the world. The act is named in memory of Sabrina Shannon, a 13-year-old student who had severe dairy allergies. She died on September 29, 2003, after having an anaphylactic reaction.

I want to acknowledge the efforts of our colleague Dave Levac, MPP for Brant, and all of the other individuals, particularly in the Niagara area, for making Sabrina's Law a reality.

Sabrina's Law ensures that all school boards in Ontario have policies and procedures in place to protect children at risk for anaphylaxis. This includes providing regular training on dealing with life-threatening allergies for individuals who have direct contact with students on a regular basis. Last year, we worked with Anaphylaxis Canada to develop resources to support the implementation of Sabrina's Law. Together we developed an anaphylaxis resource kit for boards and schools to use. These kits assist in raising awareness of anaphylaxis in schools. The kits have been made available to all school boards and every publicly funded school in the province. They were also distributed to all boards of health.

I'm also pleased to report that together with Anaphylaxis Canada and TV Ontario, we have created a web-based e-learning module that boards, principals and other school staff can access to learn more about anaphylaxis. This site includes emergency procedures and online videos on how to administer emergency medication.

À chaque étape, le ministère a recueilli les commentaires des intervenants du secteur de l'éducation qui ont évalué les produits créés.

Now the McGuinty government has gone one step further. I'm pleased to announce that the Ministry of Children and Youth Services has made changes under the Ontario Day Nurseries Act that took effect May 2 this year, 2007. Now, all licensed child care programs in Ontario are required to have an anaphylaxis policy in place to help protect those children at risk within a child



care setting. The policy must include a strategy to reduce the risk of exposure to those elements that would cause an anaphylactic reaction and a communication plan for the dissemination of information on life-threatening allergies. Plans are developed for each child with an anaphylactic allergy with input from the child's parent or guardian and the child's physician. These plans include emergency procedures for each child. This amendment ensures that staff and volunteers providing care at day nurseries and private home child care locations have training on procedures to be followed in the event of a child having an anaphylactic reaction.

We believe that all children in Ontario have the right to feel and to be safe in their communities. This amendment, in conjunction with Sabrina's Law, is helping to do just that.

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### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** Yesterday, I had the pleasure of appearing on Citytv's Breakfast Television program to prepare a number of Ontario fresh food dishes, just in time for the long weekend. I was able to show many viewers how easy it is to create a great menu with good, fresh, homegrown Ontario food. Ontario food producers grow, raise and make excellent food products, and we want people right across Ontario to know it.

Speaker, as you may be aware, Ontario's agriculture and food industry is one of the province's leading economic sectors, one that contributes \$30 billion to the economy every year and provides jobs for 700,000 people. Ontario's agri-food industry has carved out a reputation for diversity, and we enjoy a growing profile as a popular agri-tourism destination. This year, we are marking the 30th anniversary of the highly successful Foodland Ontario program, which does a tremendous job of highlighting the many fruits and vegetables grown in the province. Foodland is a partnership between the government and many of Ontario's commodity organizations, including the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, the Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers, the Ontario Tender Fruit Producers' Marketing Board and the fresh vegetable growers of Ontario.

Each year, more than 1,200 grocery stores and 100 farmers' markets across the province promote Ontario-grown fresh produce under the Foodland program. This government continues to support Foodland Ontario, and we are committed to expanding the program as part of the Buy Ontario initiative. Under Buy Ontario, we are investing \$12.5 million to raise consumer awareness and promote the consumption of Ontario-grown and -processed foods. As part of this strategy, we will build on the success of the Foodland Ontario program. Buy Ontario will include deli products, fresh meats, dairy and baked goods as well as fruits and vegetables, so that all Ontario fresh foods are easily identified at the retail level.

While it is important for the government to help everyone grow Ontario's agri-food industry, everyone

has a role to play. Consumers have perhaps the most powerful role to play in making a difference in the future of the agri-food industry in Ontario. All of us should be asking for Ontario meats, produce, dairy and baked goods at the market and at the restaurant. If we buy Ontario, everybody wins: It's good for consumers because they're getting healthy, fresh food from right here at home; it supports our farmers and our rural economy; and it even supports our environment, because when products travel a shorter distance from farm to store, that means fewer greenhouse gas emissions.

Under the Buy Ontario strategy, we are providing funding to help the ongoing efforts of nine agri-food industry associations to promote the sale of Ontario products. For example, \$400,000 went to Homegrown Ontario, a marketing program developed by Ontario's lamb, veal and pork producers to help identify and promote Ontario red meats. Another \$500,000 went to the President's Council, an umbrella group of 27 farm and commodity organizations to promote Ontario farming and food products to consumers. In addition, this summer we will launch a Buy Ontario consumer awareness campaign, and it will be outstanding. We also know that there are a number of organizations that, every summer, present their own buy local campaigns in counties and regions across the province. We applaud their efforts. Buy local and Buy Ontario go hand in hand.

It's not just in the grocery stores and farmers' markets that you can look for Ontario-grown and -processed products. You will soon see Savour Ontario promotions, presented with the Ministry of Tourism and the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corp., in which fine and vacation dining restaurants are profiling Ontario food products on their menus.

These are examples of the multi-pronged approach our government is taking to help Ontario's agri-food sector get ahead in an increasingly challenging marketplace. We already know that Ontario's farmers lead the world in production and quality. We want to help them lead in innovation as well.

Over the past two months, we've also been across Ontario presenting 55 regional awards as part of the Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence. These awards celebrate the innovative spirit that Ontario farmers are using to grow their businesses. They serve as role models who can inspire even greater innovation across the province's agri-food sector. Many of the award winners have demonstrated inventive, original ideas for promoting Ontario's agri-food industry.

For example, West Grey Premium Beef in Bruce county brought together three separate businesspeople—a grocery store owner and two beef producers—to buy a small abattoir to add value to their products. From three employees in 2003 to two retail stores and 45 employees today, the business has greatly expanded and created an innovative branding program to promote its products.

Halton region's Enviro Mushroom Farm Inc. made major changes to their operation to tap into new markets



for exotic mushrooms. They are now growing enoki and king oyster varieties. Business has been so brisk that a second facility is being added and more staff hired to accommodate the demand for these mushrooms.

In another example, Foodlink Waterloo Region is a non-profit organization that provides valuable marketing services to farms and food enterprises in the area, including a major consumer education initiative that reaches out to consumers and encourages them to buy locally. This producer-led organization launched a Buy Local, Buy Fresh map and a Taste Local, Taste Fresh culinary tourism campaign.

These are a few of the award winners recognized for their significant contribution to rural communities and our economy through innovation, new market opportunities and value-added Ontario products. I congratulate them and each of the 55 winners of the first Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence.

The innovation and the efforts we see across the province's agri-food sector deserve our support. That is why I encourage all Ontarians to join the move to buy Ontario. I invite them to promote awareness and appreciation of the great bounty Ontario farmers and processors work so hard to bring to us. The next time you're dining out or food shopping, remember to pick Ontario freshness, because the more people buy into Buy Ontario, the better off everyone will be.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses?

#### ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** On behalf of John Tory and the PC caucus, I want to respond to the statement on anaphylaxis by the Minister of Education.

At the very outset, I want to congratulate my colleague the member for Brant, Mr. Dave Levac, who tabled his private member's Bill 3, entitled Sabrina's Law. That bill received all-party support in this House on May 16, 2005, and was implemented in January 2006. Bill 3 was named for the spirited, talented student Sabrina Shannon, who died of a fatal anaphylactic reaction during lunch in her school cafeteria.

Sabrina's Law requires school boards to have policies that include training for school staff on dealing with life-threatening allergies on a regular basis, creating individual plans for students who have anaphylaxis allergies, and having emergency procedures in place for anaphylactic students. To achieve this end, I can't emphasize enough the importance for the Ministry of Education to work co-operatively with our provincial education partners to ensure that Sabrina's Law is fully and effectively implemented.

To that end, I trust that the ministry has in fact been taking full advantage of the advisory group of parents and professionals who deal with anaphylaxis. It's important for the ministry to hear from as many parents and health care professionals as possible on this important matter on an ongoing basis.

In addition, it's critically important that as much information as possible regarding anaphylaxis and how to address this life-threatening situation be made available to schools, school boards and parents.

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Some parents have expressed concern that, even today, school boards continue to direct students to home instruction rather than allow school attendance. This is unacceptable. Parents have also raised concerns that they still face refusals from some schools to the use of EpiPens and that they would only call 911 in case of an emergency. Again, that is unacceptable. That is not the intent of the bill that my colleague brought forward. A lack of clarity in this area has been ongoing and is a source of tension. I would call on the minister to address these issues to ensure that the full intent of Mr. Levac's bill is implemented in this province.

#### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I rise on behalf of John Tory and the PC caucus, and I'm pleased to have the opportunity to recognize some of Ontario's outstanding farmers. I know how hard farmers work and how much effort goes into producing our food.

While we have great family farm traditions in Ontario, farming has progressed and been modernized. Equipment has gone high-tech and in most cases is very expensive. Farmers have adopted and continue to look for new and better ways to do things. I want to highlight one example from the great riding of Oxford: James Hammerton, of Murgo Farms. In addition to farming, James is operating a tree-trimming service and has adapted machinery to safely and more efficiently trim branches and chip wood.

Even though I believe these farmers deserve to be recognized, I'm concerned that the McGuinty government is more focused on photo ops with farmers than listening to them and meeting their needs. Overall in the budget we saw planned spending for farmers and the agriculture industry cut by \$191 million. In spite of Dalton McGuinty's promise to make agriculture a lead ministry, this is just another broken promise.

Some other examples: When I questioned the Minister of Agriculture on the CAIS program three years ago, he defended it. We asked him question after question, and the McGuinty government defended the program. It took the federal auditor to say it doesn't work. It's too heavy on bureaucracy, too heavy on paperwork. The program is more interested in making sure farmers pay back overpayments than worrying about farmers getting their payment.

Minister, it's not enough to say, "Congratulations," and get your photo taken with the farmers. Photos won't help people who cannot afford to put seed in the ground or food on the tables of their own families. If you really care about farmers, you should put in place risk management and income stability programs that work. You should demonstrate that support every day, not just for pre-election photo ops.



## ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** New Democrats, as everyone knows, have been very supportive of Sabrina's Law, supportive of the member for Brant when he introduced this bill and supportive of the government when they introduced Sabrina's Law. We hear from parents that there are problems by way of implementation from time to time, and we assume this is part of a transition toward the adequate training of our staff. We assume that's all it is. I am convinced that the government's intentions are obviously very, very good and that the implementation is running its course as best it can. I assume that the advisory group to the minister on this has suggestions to her and that she is listening to them so that proper implementation of Sabrina's Law can save the lives of children wherever that might be the case.

## AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** New Democrats certainly celebrate and congratulate Ontario's farmers on the innovations and successes they have achieved, especially when we acknowledge the challenging circumstances under which some of these successes and innovations are being accomplished. I want to quote from the National Farmers Union, who talk about and raise some of the challenges. The National Farmers Union tells us that since fiscal year 2003-04, agricultural investment by the McGuinty government has been reduced in real dollars by 10%. That sounds like a government placing more challenges in the way of farmers. In fact, the National Farmers Union says that the 2007 McGuinty budget is going to see more cuts to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and the National Farmers Union wants to know where these cuts are going to take place and which farmers are going to be hurt even more. To quote the National Farmers Union spokesperson, "Family farmers are facing the worst five years of realized net income on record."

Farmers and their organizations have provided many possible solutions to address the issues for different sectors. In fact, I was hoping that today, maybe the McGuinty government would announce the new generation of farm safety nets they promised in the last election, but I guess that's not to be; or maybe a strategy to address the decimation of grain and oilseed farmers and their struggling communities across Ontario, but I guess that's not to be; or a plan to address the struggle of Niagara's grape juice growers, who now have nowhere to sell their grapes—in other words, they're out of business—or a strategy to assist beef farmers, who are still struggling with the aftermath of the BSE crisis, but that's not to be either from the McGuinty government; or maybe the risk management strategy and income stability strategy that farmers from across the province have been asking for, but I guess that's not to be either.

I do think farmers notice something. It took the McGuinty government only eight days to put in place a

\$40,000-a-year pay increase for themselves at the same time that farmers across the province were being ignored.

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** What did you get, Howie? What did you get, Howard?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Hampton:** Some members of the Liberal Party want to know what I am doing with the pay increase. I'm giving it away to charities and to local community organizations, because you can't justify a \$40,000 pay increase when so many people, especially in rural Ontario, are struggling.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** Are you going to get a tax receipt, Howard?

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Minister of Health Promotion.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Member for Essex. The leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** I've never heard Liberals protest when someone says, "I'm simply going to give the pay increase to charities and local community organizations." I didn't know that supporting local charities would raise such opposition from the McGuinty Liberals.

I want to deal with what I think was really in the announcement today: Four months before an election campaign, the McGuinty government is really announcing two more advertising programs. One will be called Savour Ontario, and you'll see the ads on television, radio and newspapers; and the other one will be Buy Ontario, and you'll see the ads on television, radios and newspapers. Isn't it interesting? Just before an election, the McGuinty government announces more money for advertising—not more money for farmers; more money for advertising.

## VISITORS

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to acknowledge in the gallery Angela Shaw, Julie Curitti, Linda Dietrich, Norma Nicholson, Wendy Fucile and Tina Otawa. They are dynamic nurses and dietitians from Mississauga East who put together a petition with 19,000 signatures to better the diets of our seniors in long-term-care homes. Thank you, ladies.

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I rise to draw attention to the Ontario Co-operative Association, which is here today. They're holding their spring reception this afternoon from 5 to 7 in rooms 228 and 230. It's important because you may recall that this House unanimously endorsed that we move towards their white paper recommendation to have a co-operative economic development secretariat.

1430

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to introduce to the House Blair Lancaster and Bryan Bourne, who are here with Breast



Cancer Support Services Inc. I'd like you to welcome them to our Legislature.

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe):** I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Community Living London. Eleven people came from London to visit us today to see the democratic action in this place. They are here.

**Hon. Michael Chan (Minister of Revenue):** It is my distinct pleasure to acknowledge a delegation from Community Living York South who are sitting in the House this afternoon. I would also like to applaud them for the great work they've been doing for people with intellectual disabilities. Please join me in welcoming them to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** It is my honour today to introduce my friend of more than 50 years, Muriel McDavid, who is making her first trip here in more than 45 years. She wants to make sure that you all treat me with respect.

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I'm delighted to welcome in the gallery behind me a number of employees from the Ministry of Health Promotion who are on a very innovative exchange program here to learn about the other side of government, the legislative side. We welcome these hard-working employees of Health Promotion.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** For the sake of saving time, we want to welcome everyone else who has not been welcomed.

COMMUNITY LIVING DAY  
JOURNÉE DE L'INTÉGRATION  
COMMUNAUTAIRE

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I believe we have unanimous consent for all parties to speak for up to five minutes to recognize Community Living Day.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has asked for unanimous consent for all parties to speak for up to five minutes on Community Living Day. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** I would like to request unanimous consent for all members to be permitted to wear the Community Living bracelet.

**The Speaker:** Ms. Meilleur has asked that we have unanimous consent to wear the Community Living bracelet. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mrs. Meilleur:** May is Community Living Month in Ontario. For thousands of individuals with a developmental disability, the guidance and support of volunteers and staff of local community living agencies provide the opportunity to realize their full potential. The expertise, dedication and compassion of our agencies make a real, positive difference in the lives of many

Ontarians, Ontarians who are striving to achieve greater independence and participate in communities.

We have a few of these agencies with us in the gallery today. I would like to recognize Diana Spacca, president, Community Living Toronto; Bruce Rivers, CEO, Community Living Toronto; David Barber, president, Community Living Ontario; and Keith Powell, executive director, Community Living Ontario.

I also know that Joe Cavanaugh, who lives a wonderful life supported by Community Living Mississauga, is here; Craig Demers, who is enjoying life supported by Community Living Essex County; Della Derrough, who has the support of Community Living Tillsonburg; Frank Knox, who is with Community Living Chatham-Kent; and Margaret Armistead, who benefits from Community Living Walkerton's help, are here in the House today. They all used to be residents of our facilities, and now they are enjoying life in the community. Kaye Jacksic, whose daughter, Brenda, was institutionalized for over 28 years, having lived in both Rideau Regional Centre and Northwestern Regional Centre, and who now lives in the Timmins community, is here today as well. Finally, I would like to say hello to Sam McKhail, who delivered me a fantastic lunch as part of Community Living Toronto's Appetite for Awareness Day, which kicked off Community Living Month in Toronto on May 1.

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with developmental service providers at the Centre for Opportunities Respect and Empowerment, CORE, in Toronto, and Reena in Thornhill. There, I had the privilege to meet many individuals with developmental disabilities who were enjoying all kinds of activities with each other in their communities.

Nos organismes rendent cela possible. Ils fournissent des environnements offrant sécurité et sollicitude, et prodiguent de l'encouragement, des ressources et de la formation. Leur soutien crée des possibilités et fait valoir des compétences pour que les personnes qui ont une déficience intellectuelle puissent vivre, aller à l'école, travailler et jouir de loisirs dans la collectivité.

En collaborant avec les fournisseurs de services, les personnes qui ont une déficience intellectuelle et leurs familles, le gouvernement McGuinty a fait de grands progrès dans la transformation de notre système de services aux personnes ayant une déficience intellectuelle. Ensemble, nous bâtissons un système solide, ouvert sur l'avenir et durable.

Nous avons aidé des milliers de personnes à faire la transition afin de réintégrer la collectivité. Il n'en reste que 510 dans les trois derniers centres régionaux. Les familles des personnes qui ont fait la transition, dont bon nombre avaient initialement émis des réserves au sujet du changement, sont les premières à nous féliciter d'avoir fait ce qui, en bout de ligne, s'avère être ce qu'il convient de faire.

We have launched innovative programs like the successful passport initiative and the community network of specialized care, which are the first of their kind in this sector. Last year, our government made a record invest-



ment, the single largest one-year investment in developmental services. This year, we are doing even more.

At CORE, I had the pleasure of outlining further details of the budget investment in the developmental services sector. As you know, we are investing more than \$62 million this year, which will grow over four years to more than \$200 million. For the first time, developmental services agencies can count on planned multi-year increases for wages and services. At the same time, we are also enhancing programs and increasing supports to families caring for family members with a developmental disability at home. This budget has been welcomed by the developmental services sector as a move in the right direction. Our stakeholders are encouraged by our commitment to supporting and strengthening developmental services.

Je suis fière que notre budget appuie les travailleurs et travailleuses des services sociaux tout en ouvrant la voie à des collectivités plus englobantes. Nous investissons dans les programmes, les services et l'infrastructure des organismes. Mais ce qui est plus important, nous investissons dans les individus, les familles et les collectivités de l'Ontario.

Together, we are creating new possibilities and a stronger, more inclusive Ontario, an Ontario that benefits from the contributions of all its citizens.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the wonderful work that was done by my parliamentary assistant, Ernie Parsons, in this sector.

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** On behalf of John Tory and the PC caucus, I would like to welcome all of our guests who are joining us today to celebrate Community Living Day in Ontario. To all of the community living organizations, volunteers, parents and self-advocates, welcome to Queen's Park. I look forward to meeting many of you today.

1440

Community Living Ontario exists for one reason: to support the full inclusion of people who are identified as having an intellectual disability in all aspects of community living. I strongly support this goal, and I know that every member in this House wants to see Ontarians with any kind of disability integrated into our province as fully as possible.

For over 50 years, Community Living volunteers have advocated for community living issues. We have seen the accomplishments of their efforts to build awareness in Ontario. This awareness can be demonstrated in a number of ways, whether it's fundraising, participation in community events, such as a community choir in my riding, or the success many have had in volunteering and employment.

One of the things we must always remember about Ontarians with any kind of disability is that they want to make a contribution and to earn a living if they can. The government needs to work to eliminate barriers to work and to encourage companies to look at disabled Ontarians as potential employees. Being able to work or volunteer is not just about the possibility of earning money; it is

about enhancing the self-esteem of disabled Ontarians and the opportunities to learn new skills. We must value the contribution they can make to our society and its benefits both to themselves and to all of us.

In my own riding, I would like to highlight the good work done by Community Living Georgina and by Community Living Newmarket/Aurora District. Community Living Georgina has helped clients get work at Tim Hortons, Harvey's and Swiss Chalet in Keswick. They have placed permanent volunteers in the local library and the fire department. Whether it's paid or volunteered work, local residents with an intellectual disability are able to integrate into the community. Community Living Newmarket/Aurora District, amongst other ventures, shows the art of its clients in the Artistic Revival store on Main Street in Newmarket. They are also looking to become partners in this high-end craft store, providing many potential employment opportunities as well. They have also placed clients in every single Tim Hortons in Newmarket, with the company providing strong support to Community Living's supported employment program. I thank Community Living in both Georgina and Newmarket-Aurora, their staff and volunteers for all of the work that they do to assist clients and families.

I provide these local examples not just to give congratulations to my local agencies but to illustrate the importance of businesses and organizations working with and supporting Community Living. These businesses would not have hired disabled workers unless they could do the job. They took a chance and then found that the risk they took was a worthwhile one. I encourage businesses, volunteer groups and others to contact community living agencies in their local communities and investigate the possibility of hiring a Community Living client or accepting a volunteer.

Integrating someone with an intellectual disability should not be something out of the ordinary; it should just be an everyday event. Every person in Ontario has a contribution to make.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** It is my privilege to rise today to talk about Community Living Day on behalf of the New Democratic Party and our caucus.

This is the eighth annual event in this Legislature, but I remember that long before I was here as a member these past six years, I was a mayor of one of the municipalities—East York—in metropolitan Toronto and a member of Metro council. I remember back in those days that community living was a very integral celebration of this great city and of metropolitan Toronto, and that many times we had people from Community Living come before us to talk in those days about ordinary people being allowed to work and to live in the community, ordinary people like all of us. It is a celebration of those people with disabilities. They are us, and we are them. We are all part of the same community. It is not fair for people anywhere to think that these people with intellectual disabilities are any different than any of us; we are all the same. They enjoy and should enjoy the



same rights and the same privileges and the same opportunities and the same right to participate that all of us do.

I was inspired, as I always am on this day, to hear the stories of people who have made the transition from one of the institutions that we still have left in Ontario, the three of them, to the broader community. They are indeed inspiring stories. I only ask the government to make sure that there are more inspiring stories. But because we need, in order for this transition to take place, the very best of opportunities, we need to make sure that people who are leaving those institutions have sufficient monies, have sufficient programs, have sufficient opportunities and sufficient trained workers in the outside world to make that transition smooth and seamless and available to all of them. We need, of course, to ensure that where they go to is a better place than whence they came.

I would be remiss if I did not talk as well about the government and what is happening. The steps, unfortunately, I feel are a little small. I would like to commend the government, to start with, for the \$200 million they have committed to the process. Unfortunately, only \$62 million is being spent this year, and it does not, in my opinion and in the opinion of many in this House, address the serious wage gap that exists in all of those places that work with and assist those with developmental disabilities. Even in the unionized sector, the wages are only about \$34,000 a year, about \$650 a week, broken down to about \$16 or \$17 an hour.

Of the \$200 million that was announced in this budget, only \$62 million is being flowed this year. Developmental workers and, indeed, the entire community called for \$200 million this year alone. This government has produced a third of it. Developmental workers have called for this money to be delivered immediately. Of the \$62 million, 2% is going to agencies for base budgets, \$20 million is for new programs and \$20 million is supposedly to try to close the wage gap. But the government has not stated to date how that money is being distributed and who will get it. This money doesn't come close to bringing wages up to par, and employers as well as employees are saying this as well.

I'd like to highlight two particular people whom I have gotten to know over the years. The first one is Ryan Starkweather. Ryan Starkweather is the fiancé of the intern who is now working in my office. He has worked with people with disabilities since he was 14 years old. He went to Fanshawe College and received two years of specialized training to work as a developmental services worker. He worked in a number of group homes in London, Ontario, supporting people with significant challenges. He often had to work night shifts at drastically reduced wages and work for multiple group homes just to make ends meet. Despite his enjoyment of the job and the satisfaction he got from helping people achieve independence in the community, he had to leave the community living sector and go to school board to make enough money to support himself, not to mention supporting a family.

Many of the colleges that offer this course have told us repeatedly that specialized training has seen a dramatic

reduction in enrolment because students recognize they can't survive on the wages that the developmental sector can and will pay.

The second person I'd like to talk about is Ashley Orrett. She is the daughter of my executive assistant, Laurie Orrett, whom I think all members of this House know. She works for the Rena Foundation. She came home yesterday black and blue. She was hit, she was bitten, she was befouled, and yet she loves the people with whom she works. She loves the developmental services sector and her employer. She works every hour that is available to her. She is enrolled at Humber College, going into the second year of a two-year program, and she knows only too well that at the end of the second year of that program she will earn, at a maximum, \$15 an hour, about \$30,000 a year, in her chosen profession.

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I commend her, and I commend all of the people who are here today for taking on a job that pays oh, too little, but for taking on that job for the love of humanity, for the love of the people with whom they work. For the good job that they do on behalf of our province, I would commend them and I would ask them to please keep up the fight for decent and fair wages. Keep up the fight so that the people with whom you work have an equal opportunity with all of us in this great province of Ontario.

#### VISITORS

**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** I wanted to recognize Lily Sazz, who's joining us in the member's gallery today, a very accomplished musician from Hamilton. She has her own group called the Groove Corporation, but more importantly, she is the front lady for the S'women in Blues festival and event. We welcome you, Lily.

I apologize for missing the group hug earlier, Mr. Speaker.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### NORTHERN ECONOMY

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier and it concerns yet another of his broken promises. Now, when De Beers Canada broke ground on its billion-dollar Victor diamond mine project, the Premier issued a press release at that time and it said: "The McGuinty government has worked to create a favourable investment climate in Ontario."

Touted in the press release was the fact that provincial tax rates for mining were among the lowest in Canada. The Premier himself was saying at the groundbreaking event that's why De Beers was here. Then, a few months later—no discussion, no consultation, no nothing—the McGuinty government almost tripled the tax rate the Premier was boasting about at his photo op just a few weeks earlier.



Will the Premier acknowledge that his inconsistency, his sudden about-face, his kind of bait-and-switch approach has in fact sent very negative investment messages about Ontario, not just for the mining industry but for the province as a whole?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** Obviously, I am not going to agree with the premise put forward in that particular question. Let me say that, as the leader of the official opposition does everything that he possibly can to bring about negative connotations associated with not only our government but with most of the province, we have been working very hard to encourage investment in this province.

I have personally travelled to places like Pakistan and India and China, and to the US and Europe as well, and we have been very successful in encouraging much new investment. In terms of the auto sector alone, we've landed \$7 billion worth of new investment, creating 7,000 direct jobs alone.

So I am much more optimistic about the state of the economy and about our future in the province of Ontario than is obviously the leader of the official opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** The Premier can travel anywhere he wants, but if you return home and then send negative investment signals to people around the world by changing the rules in the middle of the night, after people have put up hundreds of millions of dollars in investment based on the rules as they are, then the trips don't mean anything.

People who are looking to invest money in Ontario want certainty and they want consistency. This is the Premier who said in 2003 he would not raise taxes, and then he did, big time. This is the Premier who romanced De Beers, their money and their jobs, with boasts about low tax rates, and then savaged them with a big tax grab. Representatives from De Beers said—not me—this is the kind of treatment they would expect in a Third World country. They said that in this building, thanks to the McGuinty government's dumb move.

Did this register with the Premier at all? Did this register with the Premier at all as to the negative message this sends to people looking to invest in this province, the very same people you're visiting when you travel? Does it register with the Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Yet again we have more negativity from the leader of the official opposition. We have in place a fair taxation regime when it comes to diamond mines. It is the fairest in Canada. It ensures that we remain competitive. It ensures that we continue to have the necessary revenues to support everything from our First Nations peoples to our health care, to our education and to our infrastructure.

If the leader of the official opposition is now going stand up here today and say that he's going to put the immediate economic interests of the diamond mining industry before the greater public interest, then he should say so. But we think we've struck the right balance. We think we have ensured that we remain competitive. We know we have extensive diamond deposits to be found in

northern Ontario. We continue to invite the international community to come here to Ontario to make their investments. I am proud to report that they are coming, that they are interested, and they are much more optimistic about our future—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Final supplementary?

**Mr. Tory:** The Premier misses the point. The people will not come here and invest hundreds of millions of dollars based on one set of rules, which the Premier himself boasted about at the groundbreaking, only to find that weeks later, his government changes the very same rules. They won't continue to come. It's not a negative message about Ontario; it's a message about the way in which the Premier has chosen to conduct himself. Again, it's consistent. The Premier is on record promising not to raise taxes. He's on record promising to help children with autism. He's promised that the coal plants would be closed by now. The Premier knew that De Beers came here because of low tax rates—he said so—and then he tripled those taxes in a punishing way.

The Premier knows we need this investment. He knows we need these jobs for the aboriginal people and others. This tax is disastrous for Ontario. Why did the Premier authorize this tax grab which has ruined his own credibility and Ontario's?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** It's good to know that when push comes to shove, the leader of the official opposition is prepared to stand with the diamond companies. We are prepared to stand for fairness. We're prepared to do what it takes to ensure that we strike the appropriate balance between ensuring that we are competitive—and we are on a national basis—and that we continue to have the necessary revenues that help us get class sizes down, that help us hire more nurses, that help us put in place more MRIs and more CT scans, and that help us ensure we have the necessary environmental inspectors on the job. It's that holistic, comprehensive, intelligent and progressive view of our economy and our society that ensures we are truly competitive. The leader of the official opposition does not understand that. It's about a lot more than just royalties for diamond mines. It's about ensuring we have the financial resources to build the kind of economy and society that's in keeping with the values of the people of Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. New question?

**Mr. Tory:** My question again is to the Premier on the same subject. I will say this to you: I think one of the best ways we can demonstrate fairness to the aboriginal people and to other people in the north is to make sure they have the opportunity to get a good job. I would say that when the Premier talks about fairness, there is also the argument to be made that fairness should be extended as well to those who make the investments that create those jobs for people in the north. They're entitled to fairness as well, and the best fairness we can offer to the people in the north, aboriginal or otherwise, is the promise of a good, solid, secure job.



After the Premier broke his promise and nearly tripled the tax for diamond mines, the people from De Beers were outraged. At a reception right here in this building, they said that this was the kind of treatment they would expect from a Third World country, and they wondered if they'd made a mistake. In fact, they went on to say that not only might this be the first diamond mine in Ontario, it might be the last.

We have a resolution coming to this House tomorrow calling on the government to repeal this tax. Will you vote for this resolution? I urge your members to do so, so that we can get rid of this tax on the Victor diamond mine.

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**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, it's heartening to know that when the leader of the official opposition wants to take a strong stance, he'll do that on behalf of diamond companies. I'm delighted to know that he's prepared to take a strong stance.

But you know—and far be it from me to advise the leader of the official opposition—I noticed that he has not made reference to schools in this House for 146 days; he's not made reference to hospitals in this house for 57 days; he has not made reference to the environment for 224 days; and he has never, ever made reference to climate change in this House. So it's good to know, given all the pressing issues that face Ontario families, given that the greatest single challenge before the global community is climate change, given the desire we have to improve the quality of our schools and our health care, that the leader of the official opposition is in here standing up for profits for diamond mines.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Minister of Health Promotion. Supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** What I am in this House talking about today is jobs. It's about jobs for people in the north; it's about jobs for people all over Ontario. It's about the need we have to attract investment to this province so that we can create jobs so we can pay for all of those other things that the Premier talked about.

Here is what Christina Blizzard had to say about the diamond tax this past Sunday:

"Northern Ontario has been brought to its knees through job losses and mill closures.

"Young people in isolated aboriginal communities have one of the highest suicide rates in the western world. Why? Because there is no hope, no future.

"Along comes a project that promises to inject not just money but hope—and the dignity of a good job for young people. And what does the government do? It slaps a massive tax hike on it."

The Sault Star today quotes Stan Louttit, grand chief of the Mushkegowuk Council in Moose Factory. He says: "Are we going to continue wallowing in Third World conditions or are we going to prosper now? We can't because of what the government is going to do."

We have a resolution coming before this House. I ask the Premier, will the Premier vote for that resolution and urge his members to do likewise and repeal this tax?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I think the leader of the official opposition knows clearly where I stand on this issue; I think he knows where my caucus stands on this issue. We will be clear in that regard when we deal with this particular resolution.

But when it comes to clarity, I think one of the things that the people of Ontario might have a passing interest in is, where is the leader of the official opposition going to stand on our endangered species legislation, and does he have the full support of his caucus on this very important issue which speaks to our shared responsibility to preserve animal life, which enriches the quality of our overall life here in the province of Ontario?

I provide clarity, I provide transparency with respect to his resolution, but what the people of Ontario really want to know as well is, where does Mr. Tory stand and where does his caucus stand on our endangered species legislation?

**Mr. Tory:** On May 9, the Kirkland Lake Northern News ran an editorial—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** On May 9, the Kirkland Lake Northern News ran an editorial entitled "Killing the North." They described this tax as a "sneaky little paragraph" that is "a kick in the face for northern Ontario development."

"Diamonds," it says, "are one of the last mining hopes in the north as the lumber, pulp and paper industries falter."

We've seen thousands of jobs lost in the north since this government took office. This project was supposed to be a bright hope, but the shine has gone off it. According to the mayor of Timmins, he says he "worries with all the current diamond exploration taking place in the north, the tax could scare away potential investors." That's what he said, not me.

This is the exact opposite of the kind of policy we need for northern Ontario and for aboriginal people and for the kind of fairness that you talk about. We are committed to getting rid of this tax for this mine. My question again is, will you show some leadership on this, admit that a mistake was made here? Will the Premier show some leadership, admit that a mistake was made, vote for this resolution and encourage your members to do the same, to help the north, to help economic development in the north?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** If there's a call for unanimity in this House, I would beg the leader of the official opposition to look for unanimity in terms of support for our endangered species legislation, an important bill before this House today.

Again, we are not nearly as pessimistic as the leader of the official opposition is when it comes to the future of the mining industry in northern Ontario. By any objective assessment and measure, we have the most vibrant, fastest-growing mining sector in all of North America. The leader of the official opposition says we should not be on a competitive footing with the rest of Canada when it comes to our royalties. We disagree with that. Those



diamonds belong to the people of Ontario. They don't belong to any one particular investor. We welcome that investment. We welcome the economic opportunities it will create, but we also welcome the revenues it will produce to help us support better schools, better health care, better protection for our environment, a stronger economy and better jobs, especially for the people in northern Ontario.

#### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. The Kitchener-Waterloo region has lost 7,000 good-paying manufacturing jobs in the last few years. B. F. Goodrich, Image Craft, NCR Canada, La-Z-Boy, MTD—all of them gone. The lost manufacturing jobs represent 25% of the local workforce in the Kitchener-Waterloo region.

I believe that Ontario needs a jobs commissioner to fight for good jobs in Ontario, but you say no. My question is this: How many more people in Kitchener-Waterloo have to lose their job before the McGuinty government figures out that we do need a jobs commissioner to fight to sustain good jobs in Ontario?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** There's no doubt that our economy is being challenged, especially insofar as manufacturing jobs are concerned. There's no doubt about that whatsoever.

But I have had the opportunity to visit Kitchener-Waterloo on a number of occasions since we earned the privilege of serving Ontarians as the government. There is an exuberance, an optimism, an enthusiasm and an entrepreneurialism that I would love to replicate in other communities right across this province only to be found in Kitchener-Waterloo. So the Kitchener-Waterloo that the leader of the NDP is talking about is not the Kitchener-Waterloo that I know.

I do know that there are some challenges there when it comes to the manufacturing sector but, at the same time, there is an overwhelming sense of optimism about continuing to work together and build jobs. Whether you're talking about BlackBerry or others in the high-tech sector, whether you're talking about the new pharmaceutical school that we have in place there, whether it's new investments in health care and education, that community is hustling and bustling and succeeding in the province of Ontario.

**Mr. Hampton:** I think this will be news in Kitchener-Waterloo: Seven thousand people lose good-paying manufacturing jobs and the Premier says everything is fine.

Premier, it's not just the Kitchener-Waterloo region. Let's look at the Thunder Bay region, where in fact if you look at the Norampac mill in Red Rock, the Bowater paper mill, the Bowater pulp mill, the Cascades paper mill, the Smurfit-Stone linerboard mill, the Abitibi paper mill, the Great West sawmill, the Northern Hardwood sawmill, the Bowater sawmill in Ignace, it's 2,100 direct

jobs that have been destroyed under the McGuinty government.

Your own government says those jobs carry a multiplier of four indirect jobs, for a total of 10,500 jobs. Tell me, how many more good-paying manufacturing jobs have to be lost in the Thunder Bay region before the McGuinty government says we need a jobs commissioner?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** It's interesting that the leader of the NDP says he's in favour of the government taking action when it comes to supporting the manufacturing sector in Ontario, but when we put in place our advanced manufacturing strategy with an investment of half a billion dollars, the leader of the NDP voted against that. And when we've done other things that help support manufacturing in Thunder Bay, for example, with a billion-dollar investment in a subway, the leader of the NDP says he stands against that subway.

When I had the privilege to speak recently at a convention of the CAW, I was approached by representatives from Thunder Bay, who asked me if I might take up the cause with the NDP and seek their support in terms of our initiative and our investment in a new subway line, which will stand to the benefit of many families in Thunder Bay, many, many families in northwestern Ontario.

1510

**Mr. Hampton:** I'm sure people in Thunder Bay will appreciate the Premier's answer there too: 10,500 direct and indirect jobs destroyed in Thunder Bay, and the Premier says everything is fine.

Let me give you another example, Premier: the small town of Ignace, population 1,500 people. Under your government in the last few months, the sawmill was closed. Why? Because, as a direct result of the McGuinty government's support for the softwood lumber sellout deal, now all of the woodlands jobs—150—are gone. So in a few short months, over 200 jobs that support the local economy are gone. The local economy is devastated.

Premier, given that your policy of driving industrial hydro rates through the roof is responsible for so much job loss in Thunder Bay, and then the softwood lumber deal, is that why you oppose a jobs commissioner, because he might point out that in fact the McGuinty government has caused a lot of this job loss?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** One of the things that we have in fact done, and we have taken a look at this in some considerable detail, is consider whether or not a jobs commissioner would be helpful. We have decided it would not. I would encourage my honourable colleague opposite to take a look at the BC experience, where they've also just recently decided to get rid of their jobs commissioner.

Let me tell you a little bit about the investments that we continue to make in northern Ontario. Beyond the \$1-billion investment in the forest sector strategy, there's a \$1.8-billion, five-year northern Ontario highway strategy, the first commitment of its kind for northern highways.



We've invested over \$1 billion in hospitals and health capital in communities like Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay, Timmins, Mattawa, Thunder Bay and Sudbury.

The leader of the NDP made reference to electricity costs. Well, we've provided \$140 million in rebates for the northern pulp and paper electricity transition program, meaning savings of as much as 50% over the course of three years.

I have never once said that there are not real challenges; we acknowledge that. But we also acknowledge that, working with the people of northern Ontario, we're making real progress.

### NATIVE LAND CLAIMS

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** To the Premier: Yes, the Liberal government in British Columbia, much like the McGuinty government in Ontario, says they don't need a jobs commissioner, while thousands of jobs are lost.

But I want to ask the Premier about his comments earlier today. The Premier called for the federal government to turn their attention to the plight of First Nations. The Premier said the federal government should be making efforts to improve life for aboriginal communities. Given the Premier's new-found concern for First Nation communities, can the Premier explain why the McGuinty government opposed legislation that would have enshrined resource revenue-sharing with First Nations in Ontario?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The comments I made earlier today were in connection with questions having to do with the fact that there are over 800 outstanding land claims in Canada today. The proposal that I put forward to Prime Minister Harper, one that has been supported by a number of others to this point in time, is that we consider putting in place a new process, an accelerated process, one that would ensure there's an independent, objective third party who presides over this issue of the land claims. Clearly at this point in time—and I don't blame this at all on Prime Minister Harper; this is an issue they have inherited—the federal government finds itself in a position of conflict. On many occasions, if there are lands to be transferred to our aboriginal communities, our First Nations people, those are lands that are owned by the crown in the right of Canada. So I put forward a positive, constructive proposal to the federal government, and I would ask the leader of the NDP for his support in this regard.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, the jobs commissioner issue provides an example, because there used to be an independent Indian claims commissioner. Do you know who did away with it? The last Liberal government eliminated the office of the independent Indian claims commissioner.

But I want to talk about a very specific claim. I want to talk about the claim of Kitchenuhmaykoosib, an Inninuwig First Nation in the north. The courts have

even had a chance to pronounce on this. The judge presiding said this is a very unique case: one, the fact that the exploration and development may take place on lands subject to an ongoing treaty land claim; two, the fact that the Ontario crown and the company have chosen to completely ignore the interests of the First Nations.

Premier, why doesn't your government start carrying your part of the ball? Stop lecturing other governments—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked. Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the minister responsible for aboriginal affairs.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I know the leader of the third party understands the British North America Act and the Canadian Constitution, that the responsibility of our First Nations people is the responsibility of the federal government. But you have to appreciate and understand that when under the previous federal government those responsibilities failed, it was Premier Dalton McGuinty who stood in and made sure and ordered an evacuation of Kashechewan First Nation to save those people from Hudson Bay, and you had better appreciate that. So we continue to work with the federal government in supporting their role, but you have to understand that it's the primacy of the federal government.

**Mr. Hampton:** I beg to differ. I was here. The McGuinty government had to be dragged, kicking and screaming, to pay attention to the issues of Kashechewan First Nation.

But I want to quote the judge again, because this is what he says about the Ontario government, the McGuinty government: "Despite repeated judicial messages delivered over the course of 16 years, the evidentiary record available in this case sadly reveal that the provincial crown"—the McGuinty government—"has not heard or comprehended this message and has failed in fulfilling" its obligations.

I say to the McGuinty government, rather than trying to blame this federal government or that federal government, when is the McGuinty government going to start recognizing and fulfilling your obligations to the First Nations of Ontario instead of hitting them with mining royalty taxes?

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** You know, the leader of the third party really fails, I think, to comprehend all that we are doing on behalf of aboriginal people across this country. I would like to bring to his attention—and I'm sure he knows, because it comes from his own riding—the director of education for Keewatin-Patricia district, Janet Wilkinson, when she said, "I am so proud of what this government has done for acknowledging for the first time that education for aboriginal students has to be recognized. There is recognition for the first time in the funding model for aboriginal students and the projects being supported will generate new approaches to ensuring aboriginal students have equal opportunity." It's ministers like our education and our health ministers who



are stepping up to the plate and making sure that our aboriginal people have the services they need.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier. We have in Ontario our own one-one situation, among a number, which is of course Caledonia, which is now 441 days old, and we have hundreds of outstanding claims, as the Premier mentioned, across the country. We have the threat of disruptive protests on the books. I think there wouldn't be a person in Canada, leave alone in this Legislature, who wouldn't agree that we have to find a better way.

Now, the Premier mentioned in answer to a question earlier a proposal that he has put forward. I wonder, given Ontario's leadership role in the country, given that we have extensive public service resources available to us here which others perhaps don't, is the proposal the Premier has talked about a couple of times now, including here today, something that is in writing, that has been put forward to the federal government in writing? If the Premier would like to attract the support of the other parties on something where I think we would like to agree and work together to find a better way, could you make it available to us so that we might then have a look at it and see if we could support it?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** My proposal is less than original in that it has been put forward by Stéphane Dion. It has been put forward by Chief Phil Fontaine. It has been put forward, I believe, by Premier Gordon Campbell. I believe, in fact, that there is a growing understanding within Prime Minister Harper's government that we all need to find a new way. As we stare into the face of this national day of action, I would encourage all those who are thinking of protesting on that particular day here in the province of Ontario that they respect the law, that they not compromise our economy, that they not compromise personal safety.

Having said that, I think it's incumbent upon all of us now, given that there are so many outstanding land claims, that we come together—and I made the offer today in the scrum. I said that if it can help for me to meet with Prime Minister Harper, if I can help by bringing together my colleagues from across the country, we are more than prepared to do so. But I think it's high time that collectively we find a better way to address these long-standing concerns.

1520

**Mr. Tory:** I would say to the Premier, one other group he left out might be that we could start by bringing into the equation here his colleagues in this House and share with us if there's a proposal. If there is a proposal Ontario would like the make, then why don't we make it and not rely necessarily on what Mr. Dion or anybody else has done?

On the point of the protest and so on, I join the Premier in urging people not to defy the law. I recognize that there are some who will disagree with me, but I don't think it's appropriate that anyone thinking of a blockade of a highway or a rail line or any other demonstration

which might be unlawful could plan it or announce it thinking there are no consequences to doing that kind of thing. I've suggested, and there are those who will disagree and have, that we make greater use of the courts, the institution we put in place to deal peacefully with these kinds of things.

My question to the Premier is this: With all the notice we have of these possible disruptions, is the Premier exploring all options available to him and to his government to protect the public interest and to uphold the rule of law and one law for all of us?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the official opposition knows full well that responsibility for upholding law and for enforcing law lies exclusively with our police. We will not interfere in their operations, in their preparations. I have every expectation that Commissioner Fantino will do everything that he thinks is appropriate in preparation for whatever might unfold, but I will remain optimistic. I think we're all charged with that responsibility; we should remain optimistic.

The other thing I would say is that we are considering a national day of action. This is something that goes far beyond the province of Ontario. I fully expect that the Prime Minister and Minister Prentice and other appropriate people in the federal cabinet will be giving some very thoughtful consideration to how the federal government intends to react, and not only just to react but to put in place some kind of—

**The Speaker:** Thank you, Premier.

#### TORONTO POLICE SERVICE

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** To the Premier: CBC Radio reports that Susan Eng, while she was a member of the Toronto Police Services Board, was the subject of surveillance being conducted by the Toronto police force and that Julian Fantino, then with the Toronto Police Services Board, either directed or supervised that surveillance of Miss Eng as a member of the police services board. Was the Premier aware of this when he appointed Mr. Fantino to head Ontario's provincial police?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of Community Safety.

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** There have been allegations over the years about this particular situation. It was 16 years ago. It was public knowledge. This is something that was out there. It isn't something that suddenly has come up. What has happened is that we have a situation where this particular situation has to be dealt with either in the courts or by the police service itself. It is not something in which we as a government have any role to play. Under the Police Services Act, I have the ability to handle complaints about the commissioner of the OPP and the deputy commissioner. I don't have the ability to go into an individual police service



and interfere with that. There is a body, OCCPS, that can take complaints and deal with individual police services.

**Mr. Kormos:** Speaker, I don't have to tell you how inappropriate, indeed improper, it is for a police force to be investigating or subjecting a member of their board to surveillance. I ask the government this: Is Mr. Fantino going to be asked to step aside pending an investigation of this highly inappropriate, indeed improper, conduct concerning himself and his police force?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** The member has decided that this is a fait accompli, that's it done, that there's no counter-rebuttal. That is not the way the system works. This is something that, as I say, was 16 years ago. It is something that does not, at the moment, impact on anyone else. There is a mechanism for that to be addressed, and it is not in this particular location.

### CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I have a question to the Minister of Government Services on payday lending. Ontarians who are unable to get a bank account are forced to get their cheques cashed at payday lending stores or chequing stores. They're being charged, as all of us know, exorbitant rates. Those who are financially stretched and need money before their payday are charged outrageous interest rates and get into crippling debt.

Federal legislation is already in place and became law in early May. What's our government response? What are we doing to ensure that Ontarians are being protected?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** I'll say what I've said here before. We would have preferred that the federal government had taken a leadership role in this. They decided not to.

I will say this: We fully intend to make certain that these payday loans are properly regulated. My own view is that they will need to be licensed. My own view is that we will need to set a maximum rate that they can charge. I do want to make sure that we have public input into this. We have a discussion paper that, over the next few weeks, we're asking the public's input on. I would also say that, contrary to what the public may believe, none of the other provinces—Manitoba has not set a rate yet; Nova Scotia has not set a rate yet. We have put in place some temporary moves that I've announced. We'll make sure that in the offices of the payday lenders, you have a clear sign of what it's going to cost you. Then I will undertake, as I've said, to make certain these are properly regulated. That's a commitment by the government of Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Ruprecht:** Just a minute now. Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I'm having great difficulty hearing the member for Davenport. Supplementary.

**Mr. Ruprecht:** This is, as you know, a very important issue in my riding. I might even say it's an important

issue in your riding as well. If you would only pay attention, you might even learn something.

All of us have seen this industry emerge and grow. In fact, I know that there are some ridings here whose payday institutions, loan services and chequing institutions—there are maybe 14 to 15 of these stores in our ridings. That's an outrageous number.

First they emerged as chequing stores and cashing stores, but now they are being payday lenders. My question is very simple. This industry is now being asked to be regulated. Why are we still consulting? Don't we have enough information? How is Ontario going to—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** I do appreciate the question. There are different opinions on this. I would just say to the public that we've only to look at the NDP caucus. We have a private member's bill from Mr. Kormos that recommends one approach. That's the Manitoba approach, where they're licensed, where the rate is set, where they are essentially controlled by the government. Yesterday we had a different approach by the member from Parkdale-High Park, which said to take the Quebec approach. The Quebec approach essentially put them out of business. So this, I think, illustrates the reason for consultation. The NDP caucus gives us conflicting advice.

1530

The last thing I would say—and this was the advice from the Attorney General in 1992, Marion Boyd, talking about the Quebec situation. She said, "The official charging of fees stops, but the underground charging of fees does not."

What's the point of that? It is that advice we're getting broadly, in this case three pieces of advice from the NDP caucus, illustrates—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question?

### IMMIGRANT SERVICES

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Yesterday, I put a question to the minister regarding two agreements: one, the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement; the second, the Ontario-Canada labour market agreement. Specifically, the minister has direct responsibility for one of those agreements. Yesterday, he wasn't sure about that agreement and its contents. Surely he's had an opportunity now to familiarize himself with the agreement, and under the accountability section the minister is responsible to table annually a report relating to the accountability and the practices relating to the treatment of the funds and the program's success.

Speaker, through you to the minister, I'm going to ask, whether in fact he has met his obligations under the terms of this agreement and tabled that report, and if not, when he expects to do so.

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** Yesterday, I tried to make things clear to the member, who referred to two different agreements. He referred to the Ontario-Canada labour market agree-



ment, which is not under my ministry. What is under my ministry is the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement, which is the result of this government, after 20 years of Ontario not getting the program investment from the federal government that the newcomers deserve—we finally got that agreement. That agreement means that over the next five years, \$920 million will be invested by the federal government into programs like language training, like settlement programs, that are much needed in Ontario. That is being done in co-operation with the federal government. We're happy that's starting, and we think more should be done quicker.

**Mr. Klees:** I did in fact refer to the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement. I specifically advised the minister that there are sections in this agreement that he signed on November 21, 2005, that contain specific accountability requirements, one of which is that he as minister is to file, to make public, a report that relates to accountability of the program.

The minister now, four successive times, is refusing to answer the question. I'm going to draw the conclusion that he has not met his obligations under the terms of this agreement; and I'm going to ask him now: Will he undertake to file that report and make it public, as he agreed to do when he signed the agreement in 2005?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** Mr. Speaker, I'm going to refer it to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** When the honourable member asked the question yesterday, he mixed up two agreements. He didn't know which agreement he was talking about. He was asking the honourable member, my colleague Minister Colle, about the labour market development and immigration services agreements. No wonder the honourable member couldn't understand the answer that was coming out. You need to actually read the agreements.

There's one paragraph in the immigration agreement—a separate agreement that my colleague signed—that's been complied with, as he's made clear. There is an entirely separate accountability mechanism in the labour market development agreement, because, unlike my colleague, in my ministry, the federal government actually did what the member referenced yesterday, which was to transfer programs and services to us.

Nice try with the question. You have to read the agreement. We demand better standards of management than that, sir.

## EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** My question is to the Minister of Education. Today the Bluewater District School Board announced that it is eliminating up to 16 staff from office and plant operations, 17 positions from secondary school staffing and French immersion programs, and cutting special education programs. In the Near North board, parents are bracing for cuts to elementary teachers and educational assistants. That means

cuts or, for parents who have the time and money, more fundraising. Is this the Liberal government's plan for the future: Parents who can afford to fundraise get great schools and those who can't get cuts?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** Because we were able to get the grants for student needs out to boards in a very timely manner this year, the boards are having time to plan their budgets. We are going to hear some of the issues that boards are dealing with, because, I have said many times in this House, we are dealing with declining enrolment across this whole province. So boards—none of whom have fewer dollars this year, by the way; they all have more dollars, but fewer students—are having to make adjustments.

The thing about this member opposite that is surprising to me is that he should understand that what we're doing about publicly funded education in this province is something he should be supporting. He should be working with us, because he knows, as a former school trustee, that we are on the right track, that publicly funded education is in much better shape than it was under the previous government. He should be working with us.

**Mr. Marchese:** Minister, despite cuts, the Near North board will spend \$875,000 more than it receives from you for its special education programs. Bluewater's superintendent of business, Dean Currie, says that officials are making the cuts to pay down a deficit of more than \$3 million. Boards are being forced to cut educational assistants, elementary teachers and special education programs because the minister refuses to properly fund essentials. When will the minister fund essential services and stop subcontracting parents to do her job?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** Again I go back to the fact that we have put \$3.5 billion into publicly funded education in this province since we were elected. The previous government took \$2 billion out of education. Across the province, more than 50 boards are in declining enrolment. In the face of that decline, we have increased funding.

The other reality is that we have a real respect for school trustees and we believe that school trustees at the local level have the information that they need to make the decisions on a local basis about the schools in their riding.

It surprises me, because the member opposite was a school trustee. He understands how important it is for trustees to be able to do their jobs. We're letting them do their jobs. They are working with more money than they had last year. I look forward to the day when the NDP works with us and starts to rebuild with us public confidence in publicly funded education. That's what they should be doing with us.

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, people often judge the health care system based on how they are



treated as a person. Whether it's being able to get medical appointments or diagnostic scans, people want to know that the system's working for them as patients and that they will be treated with the respect and dignity that they deserve. The right to be treated with respect should follow us all the way through life, especially as we approach the end of life. One day we will all face that fate and we need to have the proper supports in place to help people to be as comforted and comfortable as possible.

1540

The minister knows of my support for end-of-life supports and services. The population is aging and we need more access to end-of-life supports, such as the Stedman hospice in Brantford. What are you doing to address this growing need in the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I appreciate the question from the honourable member from Brant with respect to needs for end-of-life care and supports in the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN. I want to acknowledge that the model of care that was developed in his community is a fantastic one, which we've been very proud to support. We're proud as well that in the year-end investments that were captured in the budget, we were able to invest a further \$9.9 million in six residential hospices across the province of Ontario. We know that the Conservatives have been against any of these investments, unless of course it happens to be in the leader's riding, in which case they lobby to be in the press release.

In the LHIN that was spoken of by the honourable leader, the Dr. Bob Kemp Hospice in Stoney Creek received \$1.6 million for capital support. Hospice Niagara began fundraising in 2005 with a capital campaign of \$3.8 million. We donated a further \$1.6 million, all part of the investment that we're making. On top of that, each of these residential hospices will receive \$580,000 of annual operating—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Levac:** The minister tells us of the good news. By the way, it's the first type of funding for end-of-life services in the province's history, and I appreciate that.

I said that the doctor shortage is a major concern for constituents as the population ages, and even before so. There will even be more pressures on doctors currently practising. You've rightfully said that we can't solve the problem overnight, but there are people in Ontario who do not have access to a family doctor right now. In my riding of Brant, we have a small urban and rural component contained within the riding, and it is often more difficult for rural areas to attract family doctors. To help with that problem, you have announced a new family health team and a new community health care centre, which have been traditionally successful at rostering new patients.

I ask the minister this: How else is he addressing the primary concerns of care and the unique needs of other residents in the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** One thing that we're enormously proud of is that the great capabilities of McMaster University will be called upon significantly as we build a new satellite medical school in Niagara. In addition, I can tell the honourable member that if we look at the community of Erie-Lincoln, we see evidence of important government investment, part of which has led to 500,000 additional people in Ontario having access to a family physician.

In the Smithville family health team, 1,255 patients orphaned by previous governments have now received access to quality care. In the Beamsville family health team, a further 912 formerly orphaned patients have received care. And in the community of Port Colborne, working with the folks in Fort Erie, there's the development of a new community health centre. All of these models are building on the capacity to have a team approach in health care that is enhancing the quality of care while at the same time enhancing our capacity to care for more Ontarians—further progress in the investments that we've made in health care paying dividends for Ontarians.

#### YEAR-END GRANTS

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** A question to the Minister of Finance: The 2006 auditor's report criticized the minister's end-of-year, mad money spending spree by saying, "In many cases, normal accountability and control provisions were reduced or eliminated to ensure the transfers that qualify for immediate expensing prior to the March 31, 2006, fiscal year-end." In response, the minister said, "We will implement every single recommendation of the AG's 2006 report," but he just couldn't help himself. He broke that promise with a super-sized \$1.4-billion slush fund, much of it to further the interests of the Ontario Liberal Party rather than hard-working taxpayers. Why did the minister break his promise to the AG and the taxpayers of this province?

**Hon. Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** It would be much better if he actually read the full comments of the Auditor General, where he says—now, the Auditor General does, I admit, have some criticism of the public service accounting board standards; those are beyond our control. But if he would just read the rest of the paragraph, he would see that all of our year-end expenditures are absolutely and completely consistent with generally accepted accounting principles and how those payments are recorded in public statements like those of the province of Ontario.

**Mr. Hudak:** As we know, the Minister of Finance wears three hats: As the Minister of Finance, he writes the cheques; as the head of treasury board, he checks and puts them in envelopes; and as the chair of the Liberal



campaign, he obviously wants to see Liberal MPPs hang on to their seats.

We saw, unfortunately, the Mike Colle slush fund that put Liberal Party candidates, Liberal Party presidents and Liberal Party donors to the front of the list and other well-qualified groups to the back of the list. We saw \$50 million for your friends at Magna corporation when they were amassing finances to fund Chrysler. They fell short; I guess you didn't give them enough money in your end-of-year slush fund. The minister is running around and handing out pre-election cheques like he's Paul Martin on speed. Minister, how do we know that your role as chair of the Ontario Liberal Party campaign hasn't trumped your responsibilities as the Minister of Finance?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, if I can get to the heart of his question, I will tell him that Liberal members in this caucus will be returned to this House, I believe, because of what we have accomplished in education. Liberal members will return to this House because of what we have accomplished in health care. Liberal members will be returned to this House because of what we've accomplished in tourism, in agriculture, in energy. And Liberal members will be returned to this House because the people of Ontario never want to return to a government which before an election hid, concealed, a \$5.6-billion deficit.

#### AIR-RAIL LINK

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South-Weston):** My question is to the Minister of the Environment. I have risen a number of times in this House to ask about the status of the environmental assessment concerning the Blue 22 air-rail link and the expansion of GO service along the Georgetown rail corridor. At this point in time, we still do not know what this minister thinks of the EA's terms of reference. We were told an answer would be forthcoming in late January. Then we were told it would come shortly after the by-election. Three months later, still not a peep.

My question is a fairly straightforward one: When will this minister quit stalling and give us an answer one way or the other on the terms of reference?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** Let me assure the member opposite that I will take the time necessary, as I do in each and every instance, with the expertise at the Ministry of the Environment, to ensure that we examine fully terms of reference that are put forward by independent proponents and make sure that we take the time to ensure the environmental assessment process is right.

The question I would pose to you is, why don't you continue to champion transit in your community by speaking to your leader about the fact that we should see a subway built in Toronto?

**Mr. Ferreira:** For each day that this minister stalls on this issue, the longer commuters along the Georgetown corridor must wait for better service. The present train

capacity is inadequate, with limited weekday service and no service at all on weekends.

However, the situation can be addressed immediately. In 1994, GO Transit completed the Georgetown corridor all-day-service environmental study report. The study answers all the questions that need to be answered to provide the expanded GO service that is so desperately needed along the Georgetown south corridor. This minister can say yes to public transit and no to private high-speed trains by accepting the 1994 study, which would get the extra trains rolling without the need to waste money on a new and flawed Blue 22 environmental assessment. If her government is as committed to public transit as she claims, why won't she do it now?

1550

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** Let me assure my friend opposite that I have stood on the platform and spoken to the people in this community alongside the Liberal candidate, Laura Albanese, who has brought forward productive and useful comments to the Ministry of the Environment on behalf of her community. Let me assure the members opposite that I will take the time to ensure that this matter and the concerns of the community are fully examined and that all of the issues are addressed.

But I ask my friend again, why does he not stand in his place and speak in favour of public transit for a community, York region, that has none? Why don't you move down to the front row and speak to your leader about his opposition to historic public transit investments in the city of Toronto? Why don't you take a significant and relevant stand on behalf of your city to tackle the significant issue of climate change instead of playing politics with an important issue to your community?

#### TOURISM

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** My question is for the Minister of Tourism. In my riding, like yours, there's a very distinct tourist draw, that being our beautiful wineries. Minister, what are some of the initiatives our government has done to promote the wine industry?

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I thank the member for Essex for his question and his commitment to the promotion of the Ontario wine industry.

The wine industry is extremely important to a number of regions in Ontario, including, of course, the Niagara region, and is exceedingly important to this government. That is why, in 2004, we announced a \$10-million commitment to the industry over five years. In 2006 our investment was further strengthened with one-time support of \$5 million and a \$10-million, three-year program for VQA wines sold in the LCBO.

We're also pursuing innovative ways to help the industry promote Ontario wines and winery tourism. Last Friday we announced that wineries and breweries will be able to apply for a licence that will let them sell single servings of their products on their manufacturing site.

This can be done to help educate winery and brewery guests, promote the local product and help improve Ontario's tourism experience.

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa—Orléans):** My question is for the Minister of Tourism as well. Ontario has the highest visitation rate in all the country. People come from all over the world, including from within Canada and Ontario's borders. They come to enjoy the longest continuous skating rink in the world and to enjoy one of many lush natural areas that our government has protected in the green belt, our beautiful Petrie Island Park in Orléans on the mighty Ottawa River. Our government has invested \$2 million in the World Junior Hockey Championship for January 2009, the single largest sporting event in Ottawa's history. This event will attract thousands of visitors to our beautiful city, home, by the way, of the Ottawa Senators.

Minister, I know that one of the areas that you, as Minister of Tourism, have focused on is convention development in the province of Ontario. Can you please tell this House what we, as a government, are doing to attract convention business to Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I'll avoid the reference to hockey and say I would like to thank the member for Ottawa—Orléans for his excellent question.

The member is correct in pointing out that our government has invested heavily in attracting convention business in the province. In fact, since 2003, we have invested more than \$7 million in convention development all across the province, in addition to substantial investments in the Ottawa Congress Centre.

As well, in the 2007 budget, our government allocated \$35 million to help build the Niagara convention centre. I know that all members from the Niagara region would agree that the jobs and economic boost this will create will be good for the area. In fact, my good friend from Erie—Lincoln said the investment will certainly be good for the tourism sector, and he and I certainly agree on that. Anna Pierce, the executive director of Niagara Falls Tourism, is excited about the investment our government has made.

Our government is investing in the convention business in this province because we are committed to creating jobs and ensuring Ontario's economic prospects. Go, Sabres, go.

## PETITIONS

### STEVENSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe—Grey):** "Whereas Stevenson Memorial Hospital needs \$1.4 million in new funding over the next three years to get its birthing unit reopened and to ensure that they can recruit enough obstetricians and health care providers to supply a stable and ongoing service for expectant mothers in our area; and

"Whereas forcing expectant mothers to drive to Newmarket, Barrie or Orangeville to give birth is not only unacceptable, it is a potential safety hazard; and

"Whereas Stevenson Memorial Hospital cannot reopen the unit under its current budget and the McGuinty government has been unresponsive to repeated requests for new funding;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the McGuinty Liberal government immediately provide the required \$1.4 million in new funding to Stevenson Memorial Hospital so that the local birthing unit can reopen and so that mothers can give birth in Alliston."

I agree with this petition and I'm signing it.

## NON-PROFIT HOUSING

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** The member from Oakville—excuse me, the member from York South—Weston.

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South—Weston):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was afraid you were going to bypass me.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas every citizen of Ontario should have a safe, healthy and decent home; and

"Whereas thousands of individuals and families are denied this basic right when the province of Ontario downloaded affordable housing to the city of Toronto but refused to pay for the hundreds of millions of dollars in deferred capital repairs; and

"Whereas poor living conditions undermine the safety and security of communities, harming children, youth and families living in affordable homes; and

"Whereas failure to invest in good repair undermines the values of the province's affordable housing as the condition of the housing stock deteriorates; and

"Whereas poor living conditions have a damaging impact on the health of communities, costing Ontarians millions in health costs; and

"Whereas investment in housing pays off in better residences and in stronger, safer ... communities; and

"Whereas residents of Toronto Community Housing have waited five years for the province to pay its bills and bring affordable housing to a state of good repair;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"Accept its responsibilities and invest \$300 million to ensure that all residents of Toronto Community Housing have a safe, decent and healthy home."

I'm proud to affix my signature to this petition and hand it to page Safa.

## ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** I have a petition that has been collected by Steven Muir, who is sitting in



the east gallery. He's a member of Oakville Community Living, a self-advocate and works in my constituency office. In the interest of time, I will just read the end of the petition:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario to increase the Ontario disability support program payments on an annual basis to ensure it covers the cost-of-living increase incurred by ODSP recipients."

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas the proposed Long-Term Care Homes Act is extremely lengthy and complex and requires full and extensive parliamentary and public debate and committee hearings throughout the province; and

"Whereas the rigid, pervasive and detailed framework proposed is excessive and will stifle innovation and flexibility in the long-term-care sector...."

There are a bunch more "whereases," but I will hurry it up:

"Therefore we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We demand that the McGuinty government withdraw the proposed act, or remove the offending sections, and fulfill its commitment by a substantial increase in funding on a multi-year basis in the order of the promised \$6,000 per resident, per year."

I have signed this.

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the McGuinty government's transformation agenda targets health improvement, illness prevention and improved quality of life for all Ontarians, and current literature and research indicate that sound nutrition directly impacts healthy outcomes;

"Whereas current literature and research indicates that the acuity and nutritional needs of residents of long-term-care homes is rising and there is an increasing frail resident population in long-term-care homes, with 25% to 60% at moderate to high nutritional risk, and that healthier long-term-care residents would decrease unnecessary hospitalizations, clogging of emergency wards and the use of acute care beds in hospital environments;

"Whereas the raw food cost funding, which was \$4.26 per resident per day in 1993 and is now \$5.46 per day per resident, has not kept pace with inflation and has presented a barrier to providing nutritionally balanced meals and providing for the increasing specialized dietary needs, and following an extensive study, an immediate increase in raw food cost funding from \$5.46 per day per resident to \$7 per resident per day has been recommended by the Dietitians of Canada (raw food cost in Ontario long-term-care homes funding review and priority recommendations dated November 2006) to provide for the nutritional needs of this population, and these recommendations are viewed as a best practice and are recognized by professional stakeholders;

"Whereas, although the McGuinty government has made significant investments in many areas of long-term care, most of these investments are not visible to family members, and there is a growing concern among family members that inadequate raw food cost funding is a barrier to planning quality menus and providing nutritionally balanced meals and beverages, and family members must speak for long-term-care residents who are unable to speak for themselves;

"Whereas the increasing multicultural nature of our aging society requires the introduction of more diverse food choices and ethnic, cultural and religious requirements which lead to the increased food costs;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to adopt the Dietitians of Canada (Ontario region) report and recommendations (raw food cost in Ontario long-term-care homes funding review and priority recommendations dated November 2006) and immediately increase the raw food costs in long-term care from \$5.46 per day per resident to \$7 per day per resident in order to meet the nutritional needs of this population."

I agree with this, I sign this petition and I will give it to page Christian to hand to the table. I also thank the dietitians and registered nurses who helped put this petition together. I've actually got 19,000 signatures on this petition.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### REGULATORY MODERNIZATION ACT, 2007

##### LOI DE 2007 SUR LA MODERNISATION DE LA RÉGLEMENTATION

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 25, 2007, on the motion for third reading of Bill 69, An Act to allow for information sharing about regulated organizations to improve efficiency in the administration and enforcement of regulatory legislation and to make consequential amendments to other Acts/ Projet de loi 69, Loi permettant l'échange de renseignements sur les organismes réglementés afin de rendre plus efficaces l'application et l'exécution de la législation de nature réglementaire et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 15, 2007, I am now required to put the question.

On April 25, 2007, Mr. Peters moved third reading of Bill 69, An Act to allow for information sharing about regulated organizations to improve efficiency in the administration and enforcement of regulatory legislation and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. There will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1602 to 1612.*

**The Acting Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Balkissoon, Bas	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Patten, Richard
Bartolucci, Rick	Fonseca, Peter	Peters, Steve
Bentley, Christopher	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Bisson, Gilles	Hoy, Pat	Pupatello, Sandra
Bountrogianni, Marie	Kormos, Peter	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bradley, James J.	Kular, Kuldip	Racco, Mario G.
Cansfield, Donna H.	Kwinter, Monte	Ramal, Khalil
Caplan, David	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Chan, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Rinaldi, Lou
Colle, Mike	Levac, Dave	Ruprecht, Tony
Crozier, Bruce	Marchese, Rosario	Sandals, Liz
Delaney, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Sergio, Mario
Dhillon, Vic	McMeekin, Ted	Smith, Monique
Di Cocco, Caroline	McNeely, Phil	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Milloy, John	Van Bommel, Maria
Duguid, Brad	Mitchell, Carol	Wilkinson, John
Duncan, Dwight	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Ferreira, Paul	Parsons, Ernie	Zimmer, David

**The Acting Speaker:** Those opposed will please stand and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Annett, Ted	Martiniuk, Gerry	Savoline, Joyce
Dunlop, Garfield	Miller, Norm	Scott, Laurie
Elliott, Christine	Munro, Julia	Tascona, Joseph N.
Hardeman, Ernie	Murdoch, Bill	Yakubski, John
Hudak, Tim	O'Toole, John	
Klees, Frank	Runciman, Robert W.	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):**  
The ayes are 54; the nays are 16.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

### ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR LES ESPÈCES EN VOIE DE DISPARITION

Mr. Ramsay moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 184, An Act to protect species at risk and to make related changes to other Acts / Projet de loi 184, Loi visant à protéger les espèces en péril et à apporter des modifications connexes à d'autres lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Mr. Ramsay.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** It's a great pleasure to rise in the House today to move third reading of Bill 184, the Endangered Species Act, 2007. This bill, if passed, will expand protection for Ontario species at risk and their habitats and help ensure that future generations of Ontarians enjoy the benefits of a healthy, abundant, biologically diverse natural environment.

The McGuinty government believes the people of Ontario deserve the many benefits that come from conserving our province's unique natural heritage and rich biodiversity. With this proposed legislation, we also recognize and seek to strengthen the direct link between a healthy, sustainable environment and a healthy, sustainable economy.

Right now, there are more than 175 species in our province that need our attention and help, and it is up to us to take the necessary action so that we can shorten that list before handing it over to the next generation. We can only wish that our ancestors had had the foresight to issue a similar call to action in time to save some of the species that were once plentiful in North America and that are now extinct.

I have an excerpt here from a book called *Our Vanishing Wild Life* by William Hornaday, which was published in 1913. Mr. Hornaday, who was an American, is in turn quoting from a report of a select committee of the Senate of the state of Ohio on a proposed bill to protect the passenger pigeon in 1857. The excerpt from the committee's report states as follows: "The passenger pigeon needs no protection." It continued to talk about all the benefits and support that this particular species had and that it was in absolutely no danger. We all know how that story ended. Almost about 60 years later, the last living passenger pigeon died in a Cincinnati zoo in 1912.

To quote further from the prescient Mr. Hornaday: "We no longer destroy great works of art ... but we have yet to attain the state of civilization where the destruction of a glorious work of nature, whether it be a cliff, a forest, or species of mammal or bird, is regarded with equal abhorrence."

He wrote that in 1913. Unfortunately there were many more decades of destruction to come. But his vision of a civilization that values nature and practises conservation is finally gaining ground.

The legislation I am presenting for third reading today supports the highest conservation values and represents how far we have come as a society in understanding our national heritage. We can all take pride in knowing that, if passed, Bill 184 would make Ontario a North American leader in the protection and recovery of species and their habitats.

#### 1620

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge and thank the staff of the Ministry of Natural Resources whose hard work, diligence and dedication has helped to ensure this proposed legislation achieves those very high standards. In fact, the head of the unit, Debbie Ramsay, is in the Legislature today, and I'd like to thank her personally for her help and all the work of her team. It's a great team.

A number of changes have been made to Bill 184 since first reading as a result of further consultation with interested parties and through debate in the House. I want to thank the individuals, stakeholder groups, aboriginal peoples and members of the opposition and third parties who have contributed to this process by making their



views known, and in doing so, have helped to make this a stronger bill.

To give you just a few examples of changes and modifications made, we added an additional purpose to the bill to signal the high priority being placed on stewardship, on engaging individuals in the process of protection and recovery. We've also increased accountability by setting a number of timelines, including one within which the minister must make a public statement of the actions the government intends to take in response to a recovery strategy. We've also strengthened the provisions that guard against illegal trade in species at risk. We adopted an opposition motion that would allow for possession of a species originating outside of Ontario if it were lawfully killed, captured or taken in that jurisdiction. This motion aims to provide greater certainty for business, such as fur auction houses in Ontario, by allowing them to continue to import and sell furs from species that are not considered to be at risk in the jurisdiction from which the species originated.

We are grateful for the support and input we have received in developing this proposed legislation, both since first reading on March 20 and during the period of review and consultation that began one year ago. An impressive amount of work has been undertaken by individuals, aboriginal peoples, stakeholder groups and landowners to ensure that the proposed legislation addresses the measures needed for optimum protection and recovery of species and their habitats.

During that extensive consultation process, ministry staff had multiple meetings with organizations representing agricultural interests and with representatives from mining and the aggregates industry. We also met with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. The public was consulted through face-to-face meetings, newspaper ads, a discussion paper, online questionnaire and three environmental bill of rights, EBR, postings. Our EBR postings have generated thousands of responses from interested stakeholders and individuals from right across the province. In a more recent EBR posting, we received more than 320 individual comments, 500 faxes and close to 800 e-mails. Included in this response, were individual submissions from our key stakeholder groups. Roundtable discussions took place during the month of April in Windsor, Kingston and Thunder Bay. All comments received at meetings, from the EBR postings and from written submissions were carefully evaluated and considered in drafting the legislation that is now before you for third reading.

The ministry also conducted a separate process in which it engaged aboriginal communities in discussions across the province. We have ensured that the proposed legislation is mindful of the aboriginal and treaty rights protected under the federal Constitution Act. Ontario will continue to meet its constitutional obligations in respect to aboriginal peoples.

Following first reading of Bill 184, First Nation communities and major aboriginal organizations were invited to participate in additional meetings to present

their views on the proposed legislation and to talk about how the unique role of aboriginal peoples might be further recognized and supported through this legislation. During these additional discussions, we heard that aboriginal representatives generally support the overall aims and objectives of improved species-at-risk legislation.

We also heard that they will continue to advocate for ongoing and meaningful consultation as well as respect for, and recognition of, aboriginal and treaty rights. We believe the proposed legislation is unique in Canada for its inclusion of specific provisions to accommodate aboriginal interests.

The purposes section of the act, for example, highlights aboriginal traditional knowledge as one of the key sources of information for identifying species at risk. We will ensure that aboriginal traditional knowledge and perspectives are represented and integrated into the implementation process.

MNR staff will continue to welcome input on ways in which aboriginal interests can be addressed as an affirmation of our mutual commitment to achieve protection and recovery of species at risk.

If Bill 184 is passed, we will work closely with all interested parties to discuss common ground and approaches to implementation. There will be opportunities for these groups and individuals to contribute to the development of policies, regulations and procedures, as well as the stewardship and incentive program through the postings on the environmental registry.

I intend, as well, to create an advisory committee made up of representatives from key stakeholder groups to help guide the implementation of the act. As we move forward, we will seek to engage aboriginal associations, our federal counterparts, environmental groups, the resource use sector, and agricultural and landowner sector to develop a range of implementation tools.

I'm also asking the ministry staff to review the implications that the new legislation has on other existing legislation, regulations, policies and programs so that we might take the necessary steps to harmonize the act within our own ministry and with other ministries as well.

As I stated earlier, right now in Ontario more than 175 of the province's 30,000 species are identified as being at risk, and may disappear from our province if their current rate of decline continues. In recognition of the need to take action, I am pleased to say that the government has made a commitment to regulate the habitat of a minimum of 10 species within one year of the proclamation of the act, should it be passed. The 10 species for which habitat will be regulated within the first year after proclamation are the woodland caribou, the barn owl, the American badger, the eastern prairie fringed-orchid, the peregrine falcon, the Jefferson salamander, the few-flowered club rush, the western silvery aster, the Engelmann's quillwort, and the wood turtle.

I would also point out that the proposed legislation includes a presumption of protection, stipulating that all



species that have been scientifically assessed as being at risk would be protected automatically. This presumption of protection eliminates the current time-consuming and cumbersome process that has been a significant hindrance to providing adequate protection in a timely and effective manner.

Regardless of how we go about it, helping species recover can be costly and complex. The best course of action is always to prevent species from declining in the first place through responsible stewardship practices. We have made sure that the proposed legislation includes new provisions that would provide even stronger support for stewardship. One of these provisions stipulates the creation of the species-at-risk-in-Ontario stewardship program to promote stewardship and other related activities. In creating this program, we recognize the leadership and contribution of landowners, the agricultural community, the land and resource use sectors, aboriginal people and the general public in the protection and recovery of species at risk.

The first of a series of workshops with stakeholders was held last week to begin development of this program. These workshops will be supplemented with wider consultation once a framework for the program has been developed. A separate process to engage aboriginal communities is also being developed. The stewardship program will work in conjunction with existing stewardship agencies and other partners. It will support province-wide stewardship and recovery of species at risk, embrace new scientific information and be responsive to changing environmental, social and economic conditions.

As I stated in the House when presenting Bill 184 for first reading, the government proposes to back up this commitment to enhanced stewardship with the funding of \$18 million over four years—through the species-at-risk-in-Ontario stewardship fund—to support public stewardship efforts.

The fund would provide incentives to landowners, farmers, aboriginal peoples, research institutions, industries, conservation organizations and others to encourage activities that support the protection of species at risk. Activities eligible under this fund may include outreach and education projects, purchase of priority habitat from willing sellers, habitat enhancement and recovery, and youth employment and research initiatives.

While stewardship is the focus of Bill 184, our bill also contains a modern and comprehensive set of enforcement provisions that reflect the importance placed on the protection and recovery of species at risk and would ensure effective enforcement. These provisions would put this legislation on par with other more recent provincial statutes.

In respect to enforcement officers entering private land, I would like to note right here in the House that a warrant issued by a justice is normally required to enter and inspect any private land or place. Warrants would only be issued if the justice believes there are reasonable grounds to indicate that an inspection would assist in

determining compliance with the act. Unless there are urgent circumstances, enforcement officers will obtain a warrant to access private land to search for evidence related to an offence. At no time would MNR staff be allowed to enter private land simply to search for the presence of a species at risk.

1630

I will conclude my remarks by reminding the members of the House that the time for Ontario to expand and improve protection of species at risk is long overdue. We know that the existing species-at-risk legislation is rigid, outdated and limited in scope in terms of the protection it provides. We also know that the current legislation lags behind the protection for species provided by other provinces and undermines Ontario's commitment under the accord for the protection of species at risk in Canada. When Ontario signed the 1996 accord for protection of species at risk in Canada, along with other provinces and territories, the government of the day made a commitment to put in place an effective legislative framework to protect our province's endangered and threatened species. This commitment remains unfulfilled in Ontario, while most other provinces have updated, or are updating, their legislation for species at risk today. We must act now to meet our commitment to the accord and our obligation to the people of Ontario.

If passed, Bill 184 would not only meet that obligation, but would also represent a milestone in the protection and recovery of species at risk in Ontario and establish a benchmark for the rest of the world.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I'm pleased to rise in debate on third reading of Bill 184. I enjoyed the minister's remarks just previous. There's no doubt that it's important for all of us to make efforts—all parties in the Legislature and in our own ridings—to protect endangered species and sensitive habitat. In fact, I was proud to have played a role, along with local conservationists, naturalists, municipal leaders and folks who just cared, to help preserve Marcy's Woods, a pristine piece of Carolinian forest along Lake Erie. As the expression goes, "They're not making any more of it" along Lake Erie. We had acted, under the previous government—then-Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing David Young had brought in a ministerial zoning order, the MZO, to protect Marcy's Woods from development. That policy was continued by the current government to ensure that that last jewel in Fort Erie, on the border with Port Colborne, is preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Similarly, I was very proud as the MPP for the Wainfleet area to work with the then Progressive Conservative government of Mike Harris to put funds, in partnership with the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, toward the preservation of the Wainfleet Bog, which had been mined for peat for generations. Obviously, it was a fuel source at the time, but this had caused considerable damage to that unique environment and habitat in Wainfleet. The previous PC government had put funds forward



in the late 1990s—I was pleased to be part of that—to preserve the Wainfleet Bog. I want to commend the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority for their leadership and their stewardship, along with the Port Colborne and District Conservation Club, among others, in maintaining that site.

Recently, I had a chance to work with Gord Harry—Gord Harry, sadly, passing away not too long after Christmas. I know that my colleague the Minister of Tourism knew Gord as well, who was an exemplary leader when it came to preserving natural areas, not only in Wainfleet but throughout the peninsula itself. As the former chair of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and a long-time member of the authority itself, Gord had been a strong champion of preserving the unique ecosystem along the old Lakewood Camp. Lakewood Camp eventually was sold. There will be significant parts that are going to be developed along the lake; people want to have a lakefront property. But there has been some land set aside to preserve the habitat for endangered species along that area. I do commend Gord and his family for his outstanding leadership. He will be sadly missed. In fact, Mr. Speaker, you may be aware that we had a very nice ceremony just a few weeks ago when they dedicated a new trail system through Wainfleet to Gord's memory and his commitment to preserving our natural spaces.

Also, I was pleased to be part of initiatives in the previous PC government of setting aside more land along the Niagara Escarpment for public protection, enhancing the Bruce Trail through that area as well. I know that my colleagues in the other two parties have a similar commitment to preserving and conserving land along the Niagara Escarpment and to using some funds from taxpayers to purchasing those from private landowners or giving tax breaks in return, or easements for properties like those along the escarpment.

We all had different species assigned to us—endangered species—by Environmental Defence a few weeks ago. Mr. Leal's was not a seal, however. I can't remember exactly what it was; it just rhymes.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** It was a wise owl.

**Mr. Hudak:** Really? It was a wise owl? That's a good one. Good for you. Mine was Fowler's toad. I have that actually on my website, [timhudak.ca](http://timhudak.ca)—a picture of my card. They're reminiscent of hockey cards or baseball cards. I know my friends from St. Marys wanted me to say "baseball cards" as well.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Hudak:** The which?

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth—Middlesex):** The queen snake.

**Mr. Hudak:** Queen snake? I wonder what the connection is? The queen snake.

At any rate, I was assigned to be the guardian over, as an MPP, the Fowler's toad. Appropriate, because Fowler's toad is an endangered species found in some of those areas I mentioned like Marcy's Woods or the Lakewood Camp property, Wainfleet Bog, among others, the

toad finding its home along the Lake Erie shoreline in the beautiful riding of Erie—Lincoln.

**Mr. Leal:** The member for Durham, I think, was a beautiful flower.

**Mr. Hudak:** The member from Durham certainly is a beautiful flower. I'm not sure if there's a particular species but—

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** A rose by any other name.

**Mr. Hudak:** The member's beauty—as he says, "A rose by any other name"—is obvious for all of us to see. Hopefully the cameras are capturing him just behind me, although that would obviously be a distraction for those watching at home.

At any rate, I was very pleased to be a part of a number of these initiatives and I will maintain my efforts as an MPP to help preserve unique ecosystems and these conservation initiatives that have done much good over the years. I'm pleased to help my friend the Fowler's toad. Although my private member's bill to give them the franchise to vote, Mr. Speaker, may not find favour here in the Legislative Assembly, other initiatives for Fowler's toad—I didn't get a smile out of you on that one; it was just a joke. But other initiatives to protect the habitat of the Fowler's toad will find favour with the MPP from Erie—Lincoln.

I was also pleased to be part of a Progressive Conservative government that brought forward a number of initiatives, some continued by the current government, others not. My colleague from Durham mentions Lands for Life. Obviously we're both very proud to be part of the Lands for Life initiative, part of the government that brought those initiatives forward. Lands for Life, of course, provided land use and resource management direction for crown lands and resources in an area covering a massive 45% of the province of Ontario. It's a planning process that involved a series of planning phases, extensive consultations across northern Ontario that led to Living Legacy, one of the hallmark achievements of the Mike Harris government. It was the single largest expansion of parks and protected areas in the history of not only Ontario but in the history of Canada. Along with that massive expansion of parks and protected areas, some \$100 million in funds were invested to help support those protected areas.

The Smart Growth strategy that Minister Hodgson, actually, a former municipal affairs minister, had done much to promote—many of those items were carried on in the current government's planning process. I'd still like to call it the Smart Growth plan. They call it Places to Grow and you put a different-coloured cover on the announcement. As my colleague said, many of those principles were simply copied and given a new name. But that initiative that had begun as the Smart Growth strategy was recently recognized by the American Planning Association for its forward-looking nature—another accomplishment of the previous PC government. Of course, the Oak Ridges moraine legislation that similarly had support dollars behind it: This Progressive Conser-



vative initiative was award-winning, recognized by Ontario's Environmental Commissioner. This is consistent with previous Progressive Conservative governments, like that of Bill Davis, that brought in the Niagara Escarpment plan, the Niagara Escarpment Commission. My colleague Norm Sterling, from Lanark-Carleton, played a role in that, and in our government, as well, and remains strongly committed to the NEC. I think it was the Robarts government that brought forward the Bruce Trail system.

Norm Sterling served under the—

**Mr. O'Toole:** It was the Miller government.

**Mr. Hudak:**—Miller government. The member for Durham is distracting me. I was going to say there is a proud history of Progressive Conservative initiatives in conservation and setting aside natural areas, of which we should be proud.

1640

As part of the Bill Davis government in 1971, the previous legislation was brought forward. I think—my colleague from Parry Sound-Muskoka will correct me if I'm wrong—it was René Brunelle who was the minister in 1971, who brought forward the previous act that was far-reaching. In fact, it was the first bill of its kind in all of Canada. Other provinces emulated that act, a powerful act to protect endangered species that has sustained to this day, until Bill 184. It has not been amended, if I am correct, since that time, some 31 years ago.

No doubt, as legislation shows the wear of time, you often need to update it. Bills at that time often had less flexibility in them than bills that come before the assembly in the 21st century. I will give you a couple of examples of some things that were rather inflexible in the previous bill brought forward by the Davis government. Obviously, the principles were right; it was heralded at the time. It was a landmark piece of legislation that has done much to help endangered species in the province. Now, three decades later, it's important to improve upon that legislation.

In the old bill, there was a lack of flexibility. If there was a tree, for example, that was an endangered species, and it was diseased and rotting, you were not allowed to cut down that tree under the previous bill. There was a risk, obviously, of that tree infecting others in the same forest or area. A wise person would say it's probably better to cull that one tree than lose the whole copse or orchard or what have you.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Hudak:** I think the member will probably agree that this bill is an improvement over the inflexibility of some items in the previous Davis bill that now, with legislative drafting, will give more flexibility to address situations like that.

By way of another example, if there was a court that was being developed and there were snakes in that area, you could weigh, in this legislation, the at-large social and economic benefits by creating substitute habitat for the snakes close by and still proceed with a needed project that would help advance the economy and bring

other social benefits. There's another example of some flexibility that was lacking in the previous legislation that will be improved upon in Bill 184.

Finally, this will allow for species-specific habitat to be protected rather than the general application of automatic habitat under the 31-year-old piece of legislation. This would mean that if a habitat were protective or essential to a species' survival in a particular area of the province, that could be designated, as opposed to applying across the province as a whole in areas where the species may not exist or have no chance of returning.

So there are, I recognize, improvements in this bill. We as the Progressive Conservative caucus, with the outstanding leadership of Norm Miller, our critic for natural resources, brought forward some very sensible, reasonable amendments to this legislation, which would have improved the bill, in my view and, I think, in the view of a lot of people who followed this bill very closely—I want again to commend our critic for natural resources, the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka, who knows the bill inside and out, and brought forward many sensible improvements to the legislation. Sadly, they didn't make it through committee. I think he had one amendment that did succeed in passing, but a number of others did not.

The legislation would have been enhanced in its ability to protect endangered species by having more funds set aside for farmers, for landowners. We have a great concern that particular landowners or farmers whose income stream may be impacted by the discovery of habitat on their property would suffer a significant financial loss. There's no doubt that endangered species bring a general benefit across the province of Ontario or internationally, and therefore out of the public purse should come some substantial compensation for those individual landowners. There are some funds set aside—not nearly enough—but I do have a fear that we'll see, as we did with the Greenbelt Foundation, funds used for advertising for political purposes or polling rather than helping to protect species habitat and helping out individual landowners.

I thought the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka brought forward some sensible changes in terms of more clearly defining what habitat was, and, similarly, to make sure that it is the minister who is ultimately responsible for making the decision. After all, we're elected for reasons: to make decisions, to be the final person responsible, the desk where the buck stops. We've had some concerns about farming this out to a committee rather than making the minister ultimately responsible for decisions both here in the assembly and across the province as a whole.

These are consistent with principles that our leader, John Tory, had brought forward in addressing private property rights issues: ensuring that adequate funds have been allocated to properly compensate those who will be financially affected by this type of legislation, involving simple guidelines to provide property owners with the ability to apply for some form of compensation if the



government brings in future policies and regulations that change the existing use of one's property.

The government should provide proper advance notice to property owners and provide them with the opportunity to voice their concern before new regulations come into force, and some sort of appeal mechanism if there is a dramatic change or a dramatic hindrance in the ability of property owners and their families to earn a living due to changes in the designation of their land.

At any rate, I know that our hard-working critic has much more to say about this. Maybe I have exceeded my seven minutes' time, although I did get a green light to go past the seven, I do want to say in my defence.

At any rate, I think there could be improvements to this bill. I certainly have concern by a number of constituents who will be impacted by this. We will continue to champion enhanced compensation to landowners and farmers impacted by this legislation. But I do believe the time has come to build on the excellent work done by the Davis government and the Harris PC government by bringing in new legislation. I will be supporting this bill upon vote later today and will continue to champion the rights of farmers and landowners impacted by this legislation and those of the Fowler's toad and other endangered species.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Hudak:** With that—I'm getting the hint—I will conclude my remarks.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** My poor colleague the critic for the MNR hopefully has some time to be able to get his comments on the record.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bisson:** You guys are having a good one back here, I can see. Not a problem. *Pas de problème, mon collègue.*

First of all, I want to say and put on the record that my caucus will be voting for this bill as it has been amended. However, I do want to point out that I'm going to be voting against it personally, and I want to explain some of the reasons why.

First of all, I think a bit of a statement at the beginning has to be made. People who live in northern Ontario consider themselves environmentalists. I know for some in the south in the environmental movement they see that maybe as not the case. I've just got to say right upfront that our backyard is the boreal forest. Our backyard is basically the place not only where we play, but the place where we work and the place where we live. We understand as northerners far more than anybody else the importance, when it comes to the forest and the environment that we live in, that we do things in a sustainable way.

However, you need to recognize that, by and large, northern Ontario is a resource-based economy. Some of the issues that have been raised through this particular debate and also by groups who had very little time to come and present here in Toronto—and I'm going to speak to that a little bit later. For example, the Ontario Forest Industries Association, tourist outfitters, First

Nations, mayors and reeves from various communities said, "Listen, we're all on the same page. We all want to have species-at-risk legislation that will achieve the aim that we are setting forward, and that is to make sure we not only protect those species that are at risk, but that we try to find strategies and approaches that will allow us to build back those species that we still have a chance to save."

Nobody understands that more than somebody in northern Ontario, because, as I said, it is our backyard. It is where we live. It is where we play. It's part of our natural environment. In much the same way as the agricultural industry, it is to our benefit to make sure that at the end, whatever we do when it comes to impacting our environment is done in a sustainable way.

**1650**

Now I want to get into some of the reasons why I personally have some problems with this bill and why others in northern Ontario have the same view.

Number one, and I guess the biggest thing, is the lack of ability for the people in northern Ontario to be engaged in this debate. We recognize that this bill affects all parts of Ontario, but let's be real: A big part of it is going to affect northern Ontario. A lot of the sites or the areas that we're going to protect when it comes to new habitat for endangered species will be areas that are in northern Ontario that may be utilized by the agricultural industry, might be utilized by cottagers, might be utilized by people in the forestry or the mining industry.

We needed to find a way in this bill, I think, to engage in a debate in northern Ontario on how we're able to make that happen. One of the things that we heard loud and clear—from the mayor of Schreiber to the Grand Chief of Nishnawbe-Aski Nation to the mayor of the city of Timmins, they're all saying the same thing: "We need to be engaged in discussion with you when you're talking about developing legislation that will impact on our environment."

People of northern Ontario specifically—and some others across the province, but specifically the north—felt that this whole process really disenfranchised them as far as their ability to influence what would be species-at-risk legislation in the end. People asked something that was not all that hard. All they asked for was that during the intercession—my House leader, Mr. Kormos from the New Democratic Party, offered to the government that we basically extend the break of the House that we're going to have next week by a week in order to allow for real public hearings in northern Ontario so we can go to the Thunder Bays of this world, so we can go to Sault Ste. Marie, to Timmins, to the Moosonees or wherever we needed to go in order to engage with northerners. Northerners are interested in being part of the process that finds solutions to the issues that challenge us as a society. All that people were asking was to be engaged.

This government, in its haste, decided, "No, we're going to time-allocate this legislation and we're going to basically ram it through with very minimal hearings here in Toronto," where people either had to drive or fly to



come down to committee here in order to present, or try to participate by phone or teleconference. That, as far as I'm concerned, is not a way of being able to draft legislation.

I'd just point out to the environmental movement that the government had three and a half years to do this. It's not like they were elected yesterday. They were elected three and a half years ago, and they could have decided to do this legislation last fall or last spring, when we had the time to do this right. People where I come from in northern Ontario and others in the environmental movement asked me, "Do you think the government will do this this spring?" I said, "Absolutely not; there's not enough time. The government's not going to introduce legislation like this in a spring session when you don't have enough time to do proper committee hearings." This is an important bill to all Ontarians, and we need to have an opportunity to take a look at it, to look at how we're able to amend the legislation and make it work for the aims that we've stated in the bill, in the purpose clauses of this bill.

So I want to say up front that one of the reasons that a lot of northerners have reacted badly is this whole lack of consultation. It doesn't matter if you're the mayor of a community, it doesn't matter if you're from the forest industry, if you're a cottager, if you're from the agricultural community or you're from the First Nations; it was the same message. Everybody said the same thing: "You're rushing this thing through and you're not giving us a chance to properly look at this bill and how we're able to make it work."

Now, I want to say again for the record that nobody is opposed to the idea of endangered species legislation. Nobody who came before the committee, that I heard, was completely against the idea. What people wanted were some amendments in order to deal with some of the concerns around the legislation. Let me just go through some of them.

I know for some members—and this is not casting aspersions against other members, but not everybody knows all legislation that exists in the province of Ontario. But one bill that I know my good friend Mr. Miller knows quite well and I know quite well is the sustainable forestry development act. That bill basically sets out how we're going to approach forestry in the province of Ontario. We have given licence to forest companies to harvest trees in our crown forests. The reality in northern Ontario is that the vast majority of the forest is held by the crown, and by way of licences through the sustainable forestry development act, individual forest companies are able to basically harvest trees based on what's in the forest planning management manuals.

One of the points that the industry and other northerners tried to make was, how come nobody is taking the time to recognize the work that has been done under, first of all, the forest EA? There was a forest environmental assessment that was done for a period of five years that looked at this issue as well as others in regards to how we

impact the forest in the practices of harvesting timber. We looked at a number of issues under that forest EA about how we develop policy so that we're able to do that in a sustainable way, so that if you are going to harvest timber, it's done in a way that takes into account the habitat of the marten, the moose, the fish or whatever it might be, so that we're doing it in a way that is not going to be harmful to those species.

In fact, a lot of people who have not been to northern Ontario were the ones most supporting this bill. If you took the time to come and take a look at what's happened—there are always bad examples out there on anything, but by and large, the forest industry has done a fairly good job. I fly. I have my own aircraft. I get a chance to take a look on a daily basis, when I'm flying, at what happens as far as forest management practices. Basically, what we do is that we try to harvest in a way that's sustainable and so that we coexist with the natural habitat. That is all done through the forest management process. I can tell you that that process works fairly well. For example, when cutting, we need to make sure that we take into account what is happening vis-à-vis the other species that are in the forest that we come in contact with as a result of harvesting practices.

One of the amendments that we asked for and that I put forward, and it was a very simple one, was an amendment that would have basically said that the sustainable forestry development act and Bill 184, the act protecting species at risk, are able to work together so that as we're doing forest management, we can take this bill and its principles and put them in our forest management planning manuals. I thought that was a pretty reasonable thing to do. In fact, it would give us better forest management planning and allow us to better be able to protect the endangered species. But the government decided, "No, we're not going to allow that to happen. We're going to disconnect the forest management planning process from Bill 184," which to me seems kind of absurd. If the people who are doing the most activity on crown land are forest companies, you would think that you would have legislation that dovetails with the work that is already being done.

So there were two points here. One was, industry was saying, "You're not giving us credit for what we've already done and what we continue to do. We're basically developing policy every day, by way of our experiences of harvesting in the bush, to be able to protect species at risk." I was saying earlier, I get a chance to fly over large tracts of land in my riding and other parts of northern Ontario. One of the things that I like to do, especially in the fall and the spring when we don't have a lot of leaves, is fly low enough to be able to take a look at, "Are there caribou? Are there moose? Are there polar bears and all of those animals?" I can tell you that they're coming back. The moose population in northern Ontario is actually increasing in a number of areas. One of the reasons is that in the past, the forest companies didn't do a good job of managing how they interacted with moose when it came to harvesting. The sustainable forestry



development act, along with the forest planning management manuals, has seen that the practices of the industry in many cases have stopped the decline of the moose population in many areas and in fact have assisted in turning things around.

We harvest moose as well in northern Ontario. People do hunt. That is one of the things that we do in northern Ontario. I myself haven't hunted in many years; I've given it up a long time ago. But a lot of people take hunting very seriously. We need to also look at how we coexist with them as far as whatever happens in the forest.

So my first point on the forest planning management manual is that we need to recognize the work that forest companies are doing and continue to do and utilize the science that they're developing on a daily basis, along with the local citizens' committees, to be able to integrate Bill 184 with the forest planning management manual. That was one of the points.

The other thing is—and again, we never got a chance to find out, at the end of the day, if the government was right on this argument or if the First Nations were right on this argument, because we never got a chance to fully get into this debate. There are a number of First Nations communities who have contacted me as the critic for both natural resources and aboriginal affairs, plus communities that are in my constituency, who have said, "Listen, we've had lots of experience in the past with the MNR coming in and creating parks and not consulting us." Polar Bear Provincial Park and a number of other parks across the north have been created around communities without due regard to the traditional uses that First Nations have had vis-à-vis the land.

1700

One of the arguments that they made was, "Listen, we need something stronger than just a non-derogation clause that protects our traditional use of land. We don't want to be in a position that all of a sudden habitat is protected next to Attawapiskat, Big Trout Lake or wherever it might be that is going to impact on a First Nation's right to use land in a traditional sense," to gather food for their families and to do those activities that they traditionally do within those particular lands. They worry that under the legislation you could protect habitat on traditional lands and then have that land taken out of circulation where First Nations would not be able to do some of their traditional activities.

Was that the case? The way that I read the legislation, you can argue it both ways. I think there's a fairly strong case to be made by First Nations that they're right. I can understand some of the argument that the government made. But because we had a lack of consultation, we did not get a good answer in regard to, "How will this impact on First Nations' ability to continue using their traditional lands according to their needs? Will habitat that is protected under this legislation supersede the right of a First Nation individual or community?"

One would argue that the non-derogation clause is the one that should take care of that. But I heard plenty of

comments from First Nations leaders and others who said, "Listen, we don't believe that's the case. Every time we're told by government, 'Don't worry, we're protecting your rights,' we end up losing more and more ability to access our traditional territories." So the history that First Nations have had with our governments has shown them that they should be wary.

This brings me to another point that's not directly related to this legislation but is something that I think the government needs to hear. We're hearing more and more First Nations saying, "Listen, you're not going to do development on our traditional territories unless you deal with us and deal with the issues that are important to us in regard to making sure that we're not frozen out of development and that whatever happens on our traditional lands is done in an environmentally sustainable way." I'm telling you, this kind of action by way of Bill 184 and not properly consulting First Nations does absolutely nothing, and I would say it would hurt the ability of the provincial government to get the balance that we need between First Nations and developers towards development. What you've done in this legislation is continue what all governments have done in the past, by and large, and that is to not listen to First Nations and not consult with them in a meaningful way about what they need done.

We need to do two things with First Nations—three, quite frankly. One is, we have to deal with the existing claims on treaties. We can't be passing the buck over to the federal government as the Premier suggested today by way of a press conference. The federal government is going to continue dragging their heels; they don't have an interest. But they are Ontario citizens, and the province of Ontario has to be part of the solution. We signed many of these treaties, such as Treaty No. 9 and others. So we need to, first of all, deal with those issues.

The second thing that needs to be done is that we need to deal with land use planning. That would have been a good way to start under Bill 184, except we didn't do it, and that is to give First Nations a say about how development is going to happen on their traditional territories. Third, we have to do revenue sharing. I'm telling you, there's not a community in northern Ontario, a First Nations community or otherwise, that is not interested in development. We all want development, including First Nations—more so for First Nations, because they have none. But what they're saying is, "You have to do it right. You have to, first of all, make sure that we're part of the land use planning process and that we're able to share the revenue of those projects after."

One of the issues, as I was saying, in addition to why I'm not going to be supporting this legislation is the failure of this government to consult First Nations and, quite frankly, the failure of this government to take seriously their concerns in regard to their fear that traditional lands that they currently use could be subject to the protections under this legislation, or part of that land, and then they lose the ability to utilize that land in a traditional sense.



The other thing that I quite object to is the following: I understand that we have to protect habitat if we're serious about protecting endangered species. I'm not going to argue for one second that we don't have to do that. I think that's an integral part of this legislation and, quite frankly, it's one of the strong parts of this legislation. But we didn't do anything to figure out how we can offset the loss of land that people will have as a result of protecting habitat. What do you do if a farmer loses part of his or her land to protection of habitat? We've got to be able to look at either compensation or, at the very least, finding ways of being able to swap crown land for private land or purchase of other private land to make sure that the person is made whole.

If you're a forest company and you lose allowable cut—let me explain this to people. If a mill is operating, let's say, with a licence that allows 300,000 cubic metres of wood to be cut, and all of a sudden we start protecting habitat on a sustainable forestry licence and diminish the allowable cut from 300,000 to 250,000, that means jobs. That was one of the fears that was raised by many of the northerners who came before us: mayors, chambers of commerce, First Nations, certainly the forest companies and others that raised that issue.

I think the fair compromise was to say, "Okay, let's do what we did in Lands for Life, and that is to swap land." We proposed an amendment in this legislation—I did as the New Democratic critic—that we have an ability to swap crown land in the event that a habitat is protected. I understand you've got to protect the habitat to protect the species—no argument—but why are the government and some of the environmental movement so opposed to allowing land swaps? If you're going to lose 50,000 cubic metres of allowable cut, there has to be an effort—it may be difficult—on the part of the crown to say, "We need to protect this particular land. It's going to impact you by 50,000 cubic metres. Let's go look at how we're able to get you 50,000 cubic metres somewhere else." In some areas, that will be easier done than others, I agree, because in some areas allocation of timber is very tight. But at least there should have been something in this legislation to get the government to deal with this, because now one of the realities is—and this is one of the fears—that you could end up impacting the allowable cut to forest companies, putting northern jobs in jeopardy. That's one of the reasons I'm not voting for this legislation.

People may think that's wrong, but I represent a part of the province that is a resource-based economy. It means that we're in the mining business, we're in the forestry business, we're in the hydroelectric business, and there have to be ways to do that, yes, in a sustainable way. I don't want to be in a position where jobs are lost in our communities across northern Ontario as a result of legislation. That's why I proposed that amendment. I thought that was a reasonable approach.

I would have voted for this thing at the drop of a hat if the government had done three things. One was if they had done what we asked them as far as committee work,

to properly consult. The second was if we had gotten the amendment in regard to merging Bill 184 with the forest management planning process. That would have made a lot of sense. It would have allowed the principles of Bill 184 to be part of the planning process about how we're going to harvest trees and also take into consideration what we're already doing in the planning process to make sure that it's a living forest and that when we're doing work in the forest industry in harvesting, we take into consideration those principles under Bill 184. The last part was if the government had at least allowed an amendment that would have said that where crown lands are affected and somebody—a forest company, a First Nation, a mining company, a cottager, a farmer, whoever it may be—loses access to their territory or land that they've been using for whatever activity, there's an attempt by the government to swap crown land somewhere else. It seemed to me a reasonable amendment, something that the government was not allowed to do. Again, that is one of the reasons that I will vote against it.

I want to say for the record again, just in case people have tuned in, that the NDP caucus will be voting for the legislation. My colleagues had this debate at our caucus yesterday, and there's a very strong view that this is an important piece of legislation for the province of Ontario and the protection of species at risk, but I cannot vote for it, for the reasons I've set forward, as I represent a part of the world that I think needs to be heard.

Another thing that I wanted to talk about in regard to the legislation is that there was an amendment that was brought forward—and I'm going to end on this point because I know my colleague would like to have a few words. Do you want me to stop now?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale-High Park):** I'm fine.

**Mr. Bisson:** Okay. Very quickly, there was an amendment that was brought forward. There was a concern that the people who are appointed to the COSSARO group could be biased. There was a worry by some—I don't necessarily share that—that if you appointed scientists with a pro-environment or a pro-development slant, whatever they do under the protection of species may be biased by where they come from. So there was an amendment to the legislation that says that if anybody on COSSARO, in any way, shape or form, intends to lobby the government on anything having to do with MNR issues, they are prohibited from doing so. I said to the government, "Hang on a second. This means to say that the very people we're going to be needing on COSSARO, the people in the industry and the people in the environmental movement—the biologists, scientists and others, who know far more about species at risk and habitat than you and I know put together—a lot of them will not be able to sit on COSSARO because in their daily lives, they deal with the MNR."

1710

Imagine if you're a forester in the forest industry. Do you think that foresters don't deal with the MNR on forestry issues daily and issues having to do with species? If I'm a forester, I deal with planning for the



preservation of marten, moose and fish habitat. That's stuff that you do on a daily basis, and you have to be in discussion with the Ministry of Natural Resources. Imagine if you are an environmentalist who's working in the industry as a biologist or a scientist, and part of your job is to lobby government when it comes to legislation or anything that the MNR does that will positively affect our natural environment. That includes pretty well everybody I know, from Rick Smith all the way through. All of these people are specialists in their domain, but they're also lobbyists. I said to the government, "If what you're trying to do is remove the bias from COSSARO, all you've done is prohibit the very best of our minds in Ontario from being able to participate on COSSARO, because the best people are the ones that we see around this place every day, who know far more about this stuff than we all do collectively."

Again, I end on this point: The government should have taken the time, done what we asked them and travelled this bill to northern Ontario. We should have given northerners a chance to speak on this bill and to suggest proper amendments.

I look forward to the vote that will ensue, I'm sure, within about the next hour.

**Mr. David Oraziatti (Sault Ste. Marie):** I'm pleased to rise in the House this afternoon to support the Minister of Natural Resources on third reading of Bill 184, the Endangered Species Act, 2007.

If I was asked to describe Bill 184 in a few words, I'd say that it was science-based, stewardship-focused, flexible and balanced. I would also say it's progressive and well designed to meet the environmental challenges of the 21st century. We know that it's been 36 years since this bill has been updated—1971—and only 42 of 176 endangered species are currently protected. So we have much work to do, and this bill takes us in a direction that Ontarians want to go, that this government wants to go, and that makes our endangered species legislation the best in Canada.

There are a number of key considerations I'd like to highlight. When the decision was made to update and modernize the existing Endangered Species Act, the government was mindful of a number of these considerations:

- the need to provide better protection measures for species and their habitat, while at the same time allowing for social and economic concerns to be addressed;

- the need to create legislative provisions, policies and programs that take into account the views and interests of a range of key partners and stakeholders. That was certainly something that was done during the consultation process, and it will continue;

- the need to ensure a science-based process for determining which species are at risk. It's not a political decision; it's not a partisan issue. It is a science-based decision that needs to be made with respect to species at risk;

- the need to provide adequate resources and develop the necessary tools to implement the proposed legislation effectively; and

- the need to engage the Ontario public, key partners and other stakeholders, all of whom have a shared interest and responsibility in the protection and recovery of species and their habitat.

The proposed legislation that Minister Ramsay has put forward for third reading today reflects all of those considerations and incorporates the input received during an extensive consultation process.

Some of the highlights of the bill in terms of moving forward with some of the amendments that have been made: The proposed legislation contains a number of significantly improved provisions over the existing act, some of which I'm going to highlight in the next few minutes.

First of all, the purposes we have established for the proposed act are:

- to identify species at risk based on the best available scientific information, including information obtained from community knowledge and aboriginal traditional knowledge, all of which we heard at the hearings and the consultations. Those amendments have been incorporated;

- to protect species that are at risk and their habitats, and to promote the recovery of species that are at risk; and

- to promote stewardship activities to assist in the protection and recovery of species at risk.

We've talked a little bit about the role of science. There is a strong role for science in this bill. The bill also stipulates that science must play a strengthening role in determining which species are added to the list for protection and their designation on that list. Under the provisions of the proposed legislation, the status of a species would be determined by an independent, science-based body called the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario, or COSSARO, which would base its decision on the best available scientific information. This is significant in that it places responsibility for designating a species at risk in the hands of independent scientific experts, where it belongs, and out of the political arena. We're further ensuring that the independence of this committee be maintained by adding a stipulation to the bill that would require that the committee not include lobbyists who have worked on matters related to the act.

Another benefit of the bill is that once the committee has assessed a species as being at risk, that species would automatically be added to the species-at-risk-in-Ontario list. This stipulation eliminates the erroneous and time-consuming process that is currently required to have a species regulated under the act. Automatic protection means that, unless otherwise authorized, a person may not kill, harm, harass, capture, take, collect, possess, transport or buy or sell any species on that list. Similarly, the habitat of species assessed by the committee as endangered or threatened will automatically be protected.

It is, however, recognized that a transition strategy is necessary for the large number of species currently identified as endangered or threatened but not currently protected under the existing Endangered Species Act.



The habitat protection provisions of the proposed legislation would not apply to these species until five years after proclamation of the act, unless a specific scientific habitat protection regulation had in fact been passed.

With respect to recovery strategies, which form an important aspect of this legislation, Bill 184 places a strong emphasis on recovery in addition to protection. First of all, it includes a stipulation that recovery strategies be prepared for all species identified as endangered or threatened. Elements that must be included in the recovery strategies are identified in the legislation. These include the habitat needs of a species, a description of threats to the survival and recovery of the species, and recommendations on objectives for protection and recovery.

Another stipulation is the nine-month timeline within which the minister must make public a statement of the actions the government intends to take in response to a recovery strategy. The bill also requires that such statements be considered when decisions are made under the act, such as issuing of permits. Furthermore, Bill 184 requires that the Ministry of Natural Resources implement actions which are feasible and for which it has responsibility, and also requires that a review be undertaken within five years of statements being issued in response to recovery strategies to assess progress towards achieving protection and the recovery of the species.

The bill also achieves additional flexibility and balance, unlike the current act, which is somewhat more rigid in a number of respects. Bill 184 incorporates a balanced approach that includes a much-needed degree of flexibility. We need the kind of flexibility that would remove current impediments to protecting and recovering species, and encourage and support greater and more effective stewardship by private landowners.

The proposed legislation would also allow the government to make decisions to accommodate compatible land use activities and, at the same time, support sustainable social and economic development. The goal would be an overall outcome that ultimately benefits the species and the habitat.

The proposed legislation contains a suite of mechanisms, including agreements, permits and regulations, that allow for flexibility and maintain an appropriate role for government.

In addition, a number of improvements have been made to the reporting requirements and enforcement section of the legislation. Bill 184 includes significant public requirements to report on species to be assessed, species status reports, recovery strategies for species, and priorities for government actions to implement these recovery plans. The bill also includes a comprehensive set of enforcement provisions to reflect the importance placed on the protection and recovery of species at risk and to help ensure effective enforcement.

1720

With respect to aboriginal and treaty rights, our government certainly is mindful of the aboriginal and treaty rights protected under the federal Constitution Act. In

addition to a commitment to ongoing dialogue with aboriginal peoples as the new legislation is implemented, the proposed legislation includes a non-derogation clause and provisions to help address aboriginal interests. The act also recognizes and incorporates the important role that aboriginal traditional knowledge can play in achieving protection and recovery of species at risk.

When it comes to stewardship, as Minister Ramsay has made clear, the proposed legislation takes a stewardship-first approach. Stewardship is not just a responsibility for government. The agricultural community, rural landowners, the land use and resource management sectors, municipalities and the general public all have a very important role to play in protecting and restoring habitats. The proposed legislation supports the role by explicitly providing for the creation of a stewardship program. This program aims to promote stewardship and other related activities that would assist in the protection and recovery of species at risk.

In conclusion, I am proud to support third reading of this important piece of legislation. By passing this bill, we would fundamentally change Ontario's approach to protecting species at risk, making it more effective and, as I said at the outset, better able to meet the environmental challenges of the 21st century. There is no doubt that with Bill 184 we have succeeded in developing progressive, precedent-setting legislation that would offer optimum protection for Ontario's species at risk as well as support the overall social and economic well-being of our citizens now and in the future. I urge all members to support Bill 184.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to add to the debate this afternoon on Bill 184, the Endangered Species Act, on third reading. I have previously had an opportunity to speak a full hour on second reading, so I did get a chance to go through the bill in some detail then. The member from Erie–Lincoln, in his enthusiasm to speak this afternoon, used up a fair amount of my time. I had a prepared speech that I was hoping to deliver, but I won't have time to get through the whole thing. So if the conclusion doesn't quite follow with the rest of the speech, it's because I had to cut out a good portion of it.

I'd like to start by pointing out how inadequate the entire process has been with respect to Bill 184. Various stakeholders have pressed for meaningful public consultation since the start of the process, but their calls went unheeded. I have asked this government and the minister responsible for increased public consultations right across the province with those individuals and groups that would be most affected by this legislation, and the member from Timmins–James Bay echoed that.

I've stood in this House and read on the record the concerns of municipalities, First Nations and industry representatives who agree that this government did not properly consult with them on endangered species legislation. I just received another letter from the county of Peterborough. I won't read the whole thing because I don't have time, but they just say, "We were not afforded



the normal time to review the details of the government's proposed framework as the information was posted by your government on the Environment Bill of Rights website on December 22, 2006, the day our offices closed" for the new year. They go on to say that they want public consultations.

The Liberal government's response to these desperate pleas was two days of public hearings in Toronto. As you very well know, Minister, many of the interested and affected parties do not live in the Toronto area. They don't live in southern Ontario, making it virtually impossible for the many people who would greatly appreciate an opportunity to be consulted to have any say at all. By holding hearings only in Toronto, this government is sending the distinct message that public input from northern and rural-based stakeholders is not as important as input from interest groups that are based in Toronto and the surrounding area.

On the second and final day of public hearings, the committee had the opportunity to hear from Anne Krassilowsky, the mayor of Dryden, who made the long journey to come before the committee and was given 10 minutes to present her case. I'd like to share with the members of this House Ms. Krassilowsky's opinion with respect to the consultation process, as she herself expressed at committee. She said: "With all due respect, Mr. Chairman, two days of hearings in Toronto, approximately 1,278 miles away, a trip which would take you 24 hours from my neighbouring community of Kenora to the outskirts of Toronto, is unacceptable. In context, that is the same distance between Toronto and Sydney, Nova Scotia on Cape Breton Island, or Toronto to just short of Tampa, Florida. The people left working in the forest, facing a shortage of time and money, are not in a position to travel those same miles to make their concerns heard here today, yet they do need to have their say."

This, in the words of a northern mayor, is how rural and northern stakeholders feel about the direction that the government has decided to take with this legislation. These groups asked you to have broad and meaningful public consultations and I, on many occasions, offered to travel around the province as the critic for our party. What you gave them was geographically and time restricted public hearings without having any real debate at these committee hearings on their concerns.

Every member in this House knows that policy-making often involves reconciling opposing interests. With this legislation, the Minister of Natural Resources had the absolute pleasure of starting from a great place. All of the stakeholders that have an interest in this legislation agree that protecting our imperilled species is an important objective that must be addressed by the government. In other words, everyone who is affected or has an interest in Bill 184 agrees that it should be updated. This includes all the stakeholders and, I would say, all the members on both sides of this House.

Despite this unanimously agreed upon starting point, the minister has not been able to properly address the justifiable concerns that many stakeholders have brought

forward. Concerned stakeholders are not denying the importance of the legislation. They are not denying the need to protect endangered, threatened and special-concern species in our wonderful province. What these groups are asking for is that proper attention be paid to their concerns with the legislation and the negative implications that the implementation of this bill may have on landowners, farmers and the forestry sector. They want to ensure that they are properly compensated for any possible losses that they may face as a result of this legislation. They want to absolutely ensure that flexibility is, in fact, a central component of the bill.

One of the central concerns with this legislation relates to the automatic broad habitat protection that will be in place immediately after a species is listed by COSSARO as endangered or threatened. While species-specific habitat protection can be developed, stakeholders are concerned that it can take years for such protection to be implemented in regulation.

In the interim, persons affected by broad habitat protection are left anxiously waiting and stand to lose significant revenue. However, the ministry has not earmarked any funding for the landowners, farmers and industry that will likely be most affected by the legislation. The government has provided \$18 million over four years to promote stewardship activities protecting habitat and green space. While this funding is welcome, it will not provide the funding necessary to fully implement this bill and properly compensate those who will be affected by its implementation.

Ensuring ministerial accountability in the listing and habitat protection is another recommendation put forward by various stakeholders in an effort to ensure flexibility remains an important aspect of this legislation. Instead of giving due regard to these concerns, there was no real debate in the short time allocated for public hearings and clause-by-clause reading of the bill. The opposition parties had less than 24 hours to put together all of their amendments after the final presentation was made to committee members.

I would like to just divert for a second to point out the timetable we worked under. That is that on May 8 we had our final day of public hearings. Those ended at 6 o'clock, so we had groups there from 5 o'clock to 6 o'clock making recommendations. Then we had until noon the next day. Noon on Tuesday the 9th was the deadline for having amendments done. Amendments involve an idea, first of all, but then they involve getting lawyers to write up the proper legalese in the proper format. That was due by noon on Tuesday, and then we had the actual clause-by-clause. As you know, this bill was time-allocated, so after spending a fair amount of time getting 13 amendments together, we then ended up on Wednesday afternoon with all of one hour and 15 minutes to actually put forward the amendments and give some rationale why they made sense and speak on their behalf. Because of the nature of the time allocation motion, at 5 o'clock on Wednesday the 10th, those amendments not yet moved "shall be deemed to be moved," so



at that point, about half the amendments of the PC, the NDP and the government were just voted on with no debate, no explanation at all on those various amendments. Because of the nature of the time frame, we had absolutely no idea of what we were actually voting on. At that point I didn't bother voting on them.

1730

Now the government has just today, this morning—and I would like to thank the minister for giving me a briefing on the amended bill. I might point out that the timing of that is such that it was after we had our last caucus meeting, when it would have been an opportunity for me to inform our members about how the bill has changed with the amendments that were made.

I just wanted to get on the record what a ridiculous time frame this bill was under and how it doesn't serve the purpose of creating the best-quality bill that this province deserves. This is simply not enough time to pay to the bill on the recommendations put forward by stakeholders, the attention and thorough debate that they so rightly deserve. Because of the Liberal government's rush to have this legislation passed, we were not even given the chance to explain all of the amendments that we put forth. Most of the amendments—PC, NDP and government alike—were not properly explained or debated in committee. I find it unfortunate that these amendments are being labelled as detrimental to the legislation when we didn't even get a chance to engage in proper debate on their stated and intended purposes.

I would like to take this opportunity to read out some of the amendments that we put forth on this bill and did not have the opportunity to debate, amendments which the Liberal members of the committee voted down. One of our amendments called for subclause 17(2)(d)(ii) of the bill to be struck out and the following substituted:

“(ii) The minister has consulted with an independent expert on the possible effects of the activity on the likelihood that the activity will jeopardize the survival or recovery of the species in Ontario, and the expert has submitted a written report to the minister on that issue.”

Another amendment that we did not get a chance to debate called for sub-subclause 17(6)(a)(ii)(B) of the bill to be struck out and the following substituted:

“(B) the minister has consulted with an independent expert on the possible effects of the amendment on the likelihood that the activity will jeopardize the survival or recovery of the species in Ontario.”

We do not feel that these amendments would have worked to water down the legislation, as the Liberals would have the public believe. In fact, Save Our Species would also agree that these amendments would strengthen the bill, as it was this coalition that recommended these changes to ensure “the highest standard of review be in place.”

In addition to denouncing our amendments, Liberal members have been criticizing the Conservative Party record with respect to the protection of imperilled species. I would like to make it clear that the Progressive Conservative Party is second to none with respect to our

contribution to ensuring the protection to our species at risk. The member from Erie–Lincoln spoke for some time on the Lands for Life process, and the member from Timmins–James Bay referenced it as well. That was under Premier Mike Harris, when an area the size of Lake Ontario was brought under various forms of protection in parks or conservation reserves. In fact, I would like to remind the members opposite that it was the Premier Bill Davis government that first introduced the Endangered Species Act in 1971. René Brunelle was the minister; I think it was called lands and forests at that point. The Conservative Party appreciated the importance of preserving our species at risk when other jurisdictions had not even moved on the issue. We provided leadership in the legal protection of imperilled species—leadership that both the government members and the opposition members of the day acknowledged and applauded. Given our record on the issue, I wonder where the members opposite got any information to the contrary.

This brings me to my last point in the shortened time I have available to speak: How will the government afford to implement this potentially costly piece of legislation? According to Gord Miller, the Environmental Commissioner, and Andy Houser, former MNR director of fish and wildlife, the ministry is in an economic crisis. Recently, the government slashed MNR's budget by 5%, a total of \$36 million. There is simply not enough money in the ministry's budget to properly finance already existing programs without the added financial stress of new legislation. Currently, the fish and wildlife program is underfunded and conservation officers are doing everything in their power to raise money to gas up their trucks. In their rush to have this bill passed, the McGuinty Liberals have shown complete disregard for the democratic process, refusing to provide meaningful and broad public consultations, limiting debate and restricting the time available to review all the recommendations brought forth by various stakeholders to the committee. It is unfortunate that the government did not ensure a fair and democratic process was in place with the proposed legislation.

Having said that, I support updating our endangered-species legislation and ensuring that our imperilled species are properly protected. Along with my support, however, comes the hope that the government will properly fund the Ministry of Natural Resources to ensure that this bill can be properly implemented and that those who are negatively affected by its implementation are compensated for any financial loss.

In conclusion, there were a lot of other points that I wanted to talk about. I was glad to hear the minister talk about harmonizing with other acts. We also had an amendment to make this act work with the Crown Forest Sustainability Act. That was another one of the amendments that we didn't get an opportunity to debate in committee because of the ridiculous time schedule under which we were operating with this bill.

**Ms. DiNovo:** Right up front, I'll say that I'm going to vote for this bill; I'm going to support it. It's a step in the



right direction. As I went to the Environmental Defence function, I understand that I am the honorary guardian of the American chestnut. I read on the back of this, "Ontario needs an Endangered Species Act with teeth: mandatory habitat protection, science-based listing, timely recovery plans and stewardship funding." What I'm going to talk about is why this doesn't have teeth. I'm going to vote for it because it's a step, but I'm also going to give a little bit of the background of what's been going on and what's really happening in this House, which has nothing to do with endangered species—perhaps endangered Liberal species but not any of the animal or tree or flora/fauna variety.

First of all, this is like a government that's sinking like a stone on the environmental portfolio. This is a government that's putting \$40 billion to \$45 billion into nuclear reactors. This is a government that refuses to close Nanticoke and the coal-fired plants, despite the promises to the contrary. This is a government that refused to pass the New Democrat Party bill to bring in the Kyoto Protocol in this province—not wait for anybody, but let's do it now because—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. DiNovo:** That's Gilles's bill, the member from Timmins—James Bay.

So this is what in fact this government has been up to on the environmental portfolio, and all of a sudden, after three and a half years of doing nothing, they bring in—voilà—this endangered species bill. Why, one might ask, are they doing it now? And more to the point, why invoke closure on this bill? This is a very interesting political point. Do you know that this bill will not come into effect until June 2008? Why? They managed to bring in a pay raise for themselves in eight days—\$40,000 for Dalton McGuinty. This is a majority government who can do anything they want whenever they want—they're a majority—and yet for some reason they're rushing us through. You heard the concerns about not consulting with First Nations. Yet this bill is not even going to come into effect until June 2008. So one might ask, where's the rush? Well, obviously there's a political motive. This place is nothing if not political, and the political motive here is to hold it over the heads of everyone in the upcoming election, to be able to say, "We did something." But have they really done something? No, not until June 2008. This is an American plan with an American timeline. That's what's happening here.

The other issue that I want to point out environmentally is that we're not going to have any species if we don't do something about climate change. This is not a government that has anything to say on that file. We've all seen An Inconvenient Truth; we all know the plight of species like the polar bear.

**Mr. Bisson:** I'm a polar bear.

**Ms. DiNovo:** There you go.

If this was really a manifestation of this government's concern for endangered species, they would certainly move on that.

The other aspect of this bill that we've heard a number of members speak on is enforcement. You know, you don't have a law unless you have enforcement. This bill is akin to having laws about, for example, driving but having no police force to enforce any of them. I would love to know, with these overworked, underpaid conservation officers, where they're going to find the time, where they're going to find the means to enforce any of this bill.

Our concern is—and it's very symptomatic of other bills that this government passes as well, by the way; this is part and parcel of the McGuinty Liberals' modus operandi. They pass wonderful-sounding legislation with no teeth whatsoever and no way of actually being implemented on the ground.

So my concerns are not with passing the bill. My concerns are with actually enacting the bill, to see that not only is it not put off for yet another year, but that when it does finally, finally get passed, it actually has somebody out there in the field making sure that the letter of the law is being enforced, because that's certainly not the case right now, absolutely not the case.

I only have a minute left, but I want to reinforce what is really happening here, and it's political. What's really happening here is a government wrapping itself in some green cloak around endangered species when in fact they do nothing about climate change, which is a huge threat. It's a threat to the boreal forest and it's a threat to all of us, including endangered species. We're the endangered species as well when it comes to climate change. This is a government that's done nothing on that portfolio whatsoever. In fact, they've broken every promise they made about the coal-fired plants. Unfortunately, they haven't broken the promise about nuclear reactors. So there we go. Then they bring in this. They bring it in with a ridiculous timeline—sometime, never, in the future—and they don't give it any teeth whatsoever in terms of investing in conservation officers who could actually enforce this law. So let's make very clear to those listening and watching at home and to the environmentalists who are here, who have done their best, I might say, and thank you for all the work that you've done on this file: I'm going to vote for it, but I'm going to vote for it with a heavy heart, because I know what's behind it.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

Seeing no further debate, and pursuant to the order of the House, I am now required to call the question.

Mr. Ramsay has moved third reading of Bill 184, An Act to protect species at risk and to make related changes to other Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

There being more than five members, call in the members. There will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1742 to 1752.*

**The Acting Speaker:**

All those in favour will please stand to be recorded by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

Arnott, Ted  
 Balkissoon, Bas  
 Bartolucci, Rick  
 Bentley, Christopher  
 Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
 Bountrogianni, Marie  
 Bradley, James J.  
 Broten, Laurel C.  
 Bryant, Michael  
 Cansfield, Donna H.  
 Caplan, David  
 Colle, Mike  
 Crozier, Bruce  
 Dhillon, Vic  
 Di Cocco, Caroline  
 DiNovo, Cheri  
 Dombrowsky, Leona  
 Duncan, Dwight  
 Dunlop, Garfield  
 Elliott, Christine  
 Ferreira, Paul  
 Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
 Fonseca, Peter  
 Gerretsen, John  
 Hardeman, Ernie  
 Hoy, Pat  
 Hudak, Tim  
 Kormos, Peter  
 Kular, Kuldip  
 Kwinter, Monte  
 Levac, Dave  
 Marchese, Rosario  
 McGuinty, Dalton  
 McMeekin, Ted  
 McNeely, Phil  
 Miller, Norm  
 Milloy, John  
 Mitchell, Carol  
 Mossop, Jennifer F.  
 Munro, Julia  
 O'Toole, John  
 Oraziotti, David

Patten, Richard  
 Phillips, Gerry  
 Qaadri, Shafiq  
 Racco, Mario G.  
 Ramal, Khalil  
 Ramsay, David  
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 Runciman, Robert W.  
 Sandals, Liz  
 Savoline, Joyce  
 Sergio, Mario  
 Smith, Monique  
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 Sterling, Norman W.  
 Tabuns, Peter  
 Tascona, Joseph N.  
 Van Bommel, Maria  
 Wilkinson, John  
 Wynne, Kathleen O.  
 Zimmer, David

**The Acting Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise and be recorded by the Clerk.

**Nays**

Bisson, Gilles  
 Martiniuk, Gerry  
 Murdoch, Bill  
 Scott, Laurie  
 Yakabuski, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):**  
The ayes are 62; the nays are 5.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion carried. Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

The time being nearly 6 of the clock, I declare that this House stands recessed until tonight at 6:45.

*The House adjourned at 1756.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
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Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b> Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Huron-Bruce	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b> Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Burlington	Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Milloy, John (L)
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
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Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (L)</b> Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
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Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	Fonseca, Peter (L)
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Etobicoke North Etobicoke-Nord	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	MacLeod, Lisa (PC)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b> Minister of the Environment ministre de l'Environnement	Nepean-Carleton	Kormos, Peter (ND)
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	Craiton, Kim (L)
Guelph-Wellington	Sandals, Liz (L)	Niagara Falls	Martel, Shelley (ND)
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)	Nickel Belt	Smith, Monique M. (L)
		Nipissing	

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
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Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick</b> (L) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior- Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
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Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
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Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

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Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.



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Rosario Marchese, Ted McMeekin,  
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Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Kuldip Kular, Jeff Leal,  
Rosario Marchese, Bill Mauro, John O'Toole,  
Ernie Parsons, Khalil Ramal  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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of Ontario**

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Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

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**Wednesday 16 May 2007**

**Mercredi 16 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Greffière  
Deborah Deller





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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 16 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 16 mai 2007

*The House met at 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon. Caroline Di Cocco (Minister of Culture):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 140, An Act respecting long-term care homes, when Bill 140 is next called as a government order the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That there shall be no deferral of any vote allowed pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 10 minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** I thought for a moment we might have to leave and watch the hockey game, but Ms. Di Cocco has moved government order number 373. Ms. Di Cocco.

**Hon. Ms. Di Cocco:** I'm pleased that I have an opportunity this evening to speak on this matter. Bill 140 is an important piece of legislation because, as the bill states, it establishes a new system of governance for long-term-care homes in Ontario.

One of the important pieces for me is that this is about ensuring that residents of long-term-care homes receive quality care that is provided with compassion and dignity. Our long-term-care homes look after our most vulnerable. As we age, we need to have a place sometimes when we need extra care. We introduced Bill 140 because it's about that compassion and dignity that our elderly need.

I went to a number of homes in my riding—there's Vision, Trillium Villa, Marshall Gowland Manor—and I spoke to a number of the residents there. What is comforting to me is that they certainly appreciate the care that they receive. The people working in the long-term-care homes also have said to me that one of their challenges is that the residents in the homes are getting older—I think the average age was 85 in one home—and that the care they need is more complex and more intensive. Therefore, it's really important that this bill is where it's at and is going to—hopefully, when this receives royal assent and is passed—make some changes because it makes the

care that we're going to provide to our long-term-care residents.

We're responding. This bill, if passed, is going to be a cornerstone of the government's strategy to improve and strengthen care for residents. We've listened to a number of people in groups concerned about the quality of long-term-care homes in Ontario through a number of public consultations that were held in January. By listening to all of the advice and the input that was provided, we responded to the legislation that had been presented, and through this consultation we made the legislation even stronger. I'd like to speak to those changes that we made.

**1850**

We're establishing staffing and care standards. I believe that this is supported by the New Democratic Party. We're extending the licence terms to allow for more certainty for home operators. This allows the system to have more flexibility for long-term planning. The previous government had no plan, and that's why we have wait lists in some parts of the province while in others we have an oversupply of beds. So we had to find some equity there. We're reducing paperwork associated with the new act and recognizing the government support of the not-for-profit long-term-care-home sector.

When this legislation was introduced, there was certainly some concern out there. I heard from some of my long-term-care homes, and they thought that they were going to be closed. They're not going to be closed. This government is not closing homes, and I just want to reiterate that as many times as I can because it is certainly a perception that I want to debunk because it isn't the case. As Ontario's population continues to grow in age, this government is going to continue to make investments in long-term care.

It's important that we don't presume that, with this legislation, everything is perfect and everything can be fixed overnight. It's a process of continuous improvement. It's a process that strengthens our legislation so that different things can happen.

I want to highlight some other aspects of this legislation. For instance, it's promoting zero tolerance of abuse and neglect of long-term-care-home residents. Again, there's whistle-blowing protection for staff, residents and volunteers who report abuse or neglect. We're enshrining in legislation that a registered nurse be on duty in the home 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I say in this House that these are enshrined pieces in the legislation that strengthen and support our seniors, because, after all, it isn't about the facilities all the time; it's about the



people who are in them. It's important that the elderly live in dignity and they're cared for in every way to the best of our ability. That's what a good society is all about, and this legislation helps us to continue moving in that direction. Again, it's another example of how important it is to this government to improve the quality of life of all of our citizens, including, of course, our long-term-care residents.

I want to also, just for the record, state some of the other initiatives that have been included that have already happened in some cases and that we're moving towards. For instance, we funded long-term-care homes so that we could hire new direct care staff, and that number is 4,900 new direct care staff, which includes 1,101 nurses since 2004. Again, we're improving, we're adding people to the system and we're adding beds. I have to say that we also put 4,912 new long-term-care beds in operation since April 2004 and we have announced plans to add 1,750 new beds and to replace 662 beds in the communities of south Niagara, south Simcoe, Guelph, London, Windsor, Hastings, Kingston, Ottawa, Sudbury and Thunder Bay.

Certainly, one of the situations I've encountered a few times in my term as MPP was when one spouse was in one nursing home and another spouse was in another nursing home. That happened a few times that I encountered. You know, Speaker, we now have enabled spouses to be reunited in the same long-term-care home, and to me that's just the right thing to do so people can care for themselves.

I have to say, I watched both my parents—my father was 85, my mother was 82, and they, in the last few months of their lives, were separated because of illness. I saw that my father had a very difficult time coping with the fact that my mother was somewhere and he was not with her. They died within 10 days of one another because they were so close. So there is a need, and for the times when one is at that stage in their life, if it's possible to stay together, it is absolutely the right thing to do. As my dad said to me, "You know, the older we get, the more we love each other; the older we get, the more we care about each other." It's important that we now have that capacity to reunite our elderly, and that's what we've done. As I said, in the past that wasn't the case. We had these rules where if one spouse was in one home, it wasn't necessarily the case that the other spouse would be in the same home.

So I guess at the end of the day I'm proud of the work that this government has done. There's a lot more we have to do, that we have to continue to do, but this legislation improves and strengthens the care that our long-term-care residents will have in the later part of their years, and I'm proud of the work that we've done. I want to thank the Minister of Health and the parliamentary assistant for the work they have done on this file. I know that as time goes on, we'll continue to strength this sector.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I rise today to speak to Bill 140, which is a bill, of course, that was supposed

to deal with improving the lot in life for our seniors, to upgrade and to provide, as the minister opposite said, quality care for our seniors.

The bill doesn't seem to have achieved the goals that the government themselves set out to achieve. Of course, you would know that in the campaign document—and you know that very well, Mr. Speaker—the government promised to spend and to provide \$6,000 more per resident in the long-term-care system in order to provide that quality care. They were going to upgrade the quality of the homes. The previous government funded 20,000 new long-term-care beds which were going to be used to alleviate the backlog of people who were waiting for beds. We spent money on 16,000 beds that were D facilities that were moved up to A facilities. The government of today—I would have thought there would have been something in this bill that would help facilitate the process of taking the C beds and turning them into A beds so everyone would get the quality care and a similar level of care to what their neighbours and their friends get. There's nothing in the bill that does that, and I think that's of great concern.

I had the opportunity to attend some of the public hearings, and what I found interesting was that it didn't seem to matter what group was presenting; there was no one who came in and presented and said, "We like this bill the way it is." Everyone who came in had certain things they liked about the bill, but all had serious problems with it. I would just like to very quickly go through some of the areas.

#### 1900

At the public hearings in London—of course, as you would know, that's rather close to my riding, so that was an opportunity for some of the people who provide long-term care in my riding, some of the people who represent the associations, the resident councils and so forth in long-term-care facilities, and the labour people who provide the care in the homes for long-term care. I just want to go through some of the things that they told us were wrong with the bill and where they were concerned.

I'll start with the Oxford Health Coalition, which presented to the committee. I wouldn't think of reading through their whole presentation—we would be here for the whole day—but there is one paragraph I do want to read. I think this was fairly consistent with all the presenters who represented the labour that provides the service in the homes.

This is Shawn Rouse, who is chair of the local for the workers in the long-term-care facility:

"Where the act does fail the residents and their families is in what is missing in the act. What we see as a root issue in many of the continuing problems plaguing resident care is the missing language surrounding a minimum care standard. An interesting issue has arisen in the presentation of an actual regulation reported on the long-term-care website that speaks to a minimum requirement for staffing levels in the dietary department of 0.42 hours per resident meal day. There is a formula to amend the number if the dietary department is shared with a retire-



ment home or a hospital. Imagine that there are no minimum staffing levels in nursing, but there are in dietary. Compliance staff will be enforcing this and may request staffing schedules, records of resident meal days and duty rosters, among other things. Dietary standards are outlined in seven pages, and nursing standards are outlined in four."

I think I would have to agree with him that in fact there seems to be a bit of a problem there, that we are more interested in looking at what is happening in the operation of the facility in the kitchen than we are in what is happening with the actual care for the people living there. I think that's a sad commentary. He brings that out because that's what is in this bill. That's what this government is proposing to do with this legislation that they said was going to provide quality care and improve that quality care for our seniors.

As I said when I started, everyone who came to present had some concerns with the bill. The minister opposite mentioned that this was designed to help the not-for-profit organizations. One of those not-for-profit organizations is the municipal home for the aged. Again, I've had the pleasure and privilege of sitting on the board of our local Woodingford Lodge and the long-term-care facilities in the riding. The warden of the county made a presentation. I just want to point out some of the concerns that they had with the legislation. Again, they were trying to deal with these issues, and it seems that they've come up short.

"A paramount concern of the county of Oxford related to this piece of legislation deals with the failure of the province to make a commitment to ensure that there will be sufficient long-term-care beds available in Ontario in general, and in Oxford county in particular, to meet the future long-term-care needs of the residents of our communities."

Again, there is nothing in this piece of legislation that provides for increasing the number of beds and, furthermore, improving the quality of the beds that exist.

This is another problem that we found in Oxford county and in all municipal homes for the aged: "The county of Oxford contributes some \$5 million per year to the cost of resident care and services at Woodingford Lodge to meet the current standards. It is becoming progressively more difficult to maintain this level of subsidy due to the capital financing commitments. Unless the government provides additional funding, Woodingford Lodge will be forced to apply even more of its limited resources to meeting all the new administrative requirements of the act."

Again, there are a lot more administrative things in this act that need to be done. There is absolutely nothing in this act that will help the operators of the facilities to pay for that service.

Number three was "a requirement to establish and maintain a home. Under section 117 of Bill 140, southern municipalities will continue to be required to establish and maintain a long-term-care home or joint home or help maintain a home or joint home with the ministry's

approval." Again, of course, there's an exemption for northern Ontario. The problem that arises is that they mandate that the municipality must do it, but there is no funding applied to it. Furthermore, this bill increases the standards that are required.

When they got through with their presentation and I thanked the warden, I said, "The number one issue in the whole presentation appears to be that we can make these changes, and a lot of the changes are good for the system, but what we need is funding to go with it. So we'll leave the funding as the number one priority," and the warden agreed with that. "As the second priority in your presentation, what would you say if we could convince the government to make a change, but only one? What would it be in the bill that would make this a better bill as it relates to long-term care and the county's operation of Woodingford Lodge?"

The warden said, "If I could maybe turn that over to Mr. Orvidas, who, as I mentioned, is the director and has a little more day-to-day interaction with staff, the residents and also family members."

Again, it's so important that we hear from the people who actually operate the facilities and whether this legislation will do that.

"I think enhanced funding is a critical component. However, I think that's so closely tied to operational funding that one goes hand in hand with the other."

Again, it comes down to—it's wonderful to make all kinds of rules and regulations and set standards, but you have to put funding in.

"An area that we have particular concern about, as has been mentioned, is the prescriptive regulations and the need for staff to spend so much more of their time, then, to meet those requirements rather than doing what they do best, which is bedside nursing."

Again, he is very concerned that there is no mandate and no funding there to help with more people to look after the bureaucracy. Of course, it's going to be more and more difficult for them to meet the needs in the bill—and absolutely no improved services for the residents.

The last one I wanted to just quickly touch on was the presentation that was made by Mr. Brent Gingerich, who is the operator of PeopleCare in Tavistock. I won't go through the whole thing, but there's just one section of it here that I found rather helpful as we decide whether this bill meets the targets that were set.

"This act could be win-win for the government, could be win-win for the clients and public, could be win-win for the staff and operators and could be win-win for owners and financiers. This is why the Ontario Long Term Care Association has proposed some 95 in-depth and detailed amendments. I'd encourage you to adopt these amendments as presented." Of course, they had been presented to the committee before.

He goes on to say further down, "With Bill 140, there's still no workable plan"—I should maybe read the paragraph before that's so critical: "PeopleCare's three homes are classified as C by the Ministry of Health, which means the physical structures, the bricks and



mortar, comply with 1972 nursing home standards but do not meet the newly introduced 1998 standards. My colleagues in the association and I have been advocating the government since the 1998 standards were introduced to develop a workable plan to get these 1972 C homes, which represent about 50% of the homes in the province, to standards more acceptable to today's residents and their families. Unfortunately, a plan has never been introduced.

"With Bill 140, there's still no workable plan for the future. According to Bill 140, I may get notification by the ministry informing me if I'll get to remain open after seven years. In the absence of such notification, I can expect to be closed." The minister said that this wasn't going to happen, but in fact, the people who are running the homes believe that it is going to happen. "That's the level of planning for capital in this act. For a long-term-care organization with an outstanding reputation that has been a model provider of long-term-care services for 40 years, this has caused a tremendous amount of uncertainty regarding our future existence"—not only for the homes but for the residents in those homes, because if they cannot get their licence extended, those people will have to find new places to live.

"The worst thing is, Bill 140 does not even identify what we need to do in order to keep our licence after seven years." They have amended the bill to now make it, I believe, 15 years. "My bank is not optimistic. My banker calls this cloud of uncertainty 'risk,' and he indicates that banks don't like risk. Unfortunately, I have to worry a lot about what my banker thinks, because part of our extended family's succession and transition plan for me required that I take out a mortgage. Now, because Bill 140 does not outline a workable plan for C homes, our mortgage rates have gone up—my payments have gone up considerably. There is less money in the budget to do the cosmetic upgrades and repairs to our home. But the worst thing—the absolute worst thing—is that we may not be able to renew our mortgage in four years—bottom line. Talk about uncertainty. Is it acceptable to create that type of environment in this sector?"—and again, not only for this sector owning the home but the people living in it. I think that's the position of the people who spoke to us, the providers of the service and the seniors.

1910

I haven't talked much about the seniors, and I think it's so important. I'm going to touch on it just for a moment. Last Friday, we had a group of people in who represent the seniors in Oxford county. Their number one concern was how we go about making sure that the level of service that is being mandated is in fact being provided. The only thing that's out there to make sure it's happening is inspectors from the ministry who come in from time to time, always with a phone call to say they're coming. So how can the people be assured that their family members in the home are being cared for? Their request was that an ombudsman position would be created—which had been promised by the government—

that in fact they would be able to report to without notice, and that he could check to make sure that all the people in the home were getting the quality care they were entitled to.

With that, I've touched on the areas that I think are of great concern. I think the bill falls far short of what the government said they were trying to achieve, and it falls far short of what the seniors, the operators of the facilities, and the public and the people of Ontario have a right to expect from a bill that deals with long-term care. Again, I thank you very much for your time, and I look forward to being able to oppose this legislation on behalf of the constituents I represent.

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** I appreciate the opportunity to speak again this evening to Bill 140. As you know, I can go on for hours about this particular bill and the great work that we've done in the long-term-care sector over the last three and a half years.

I just wanted this evening to briefly address some of the concerns that have been raised in prior third reading debate on Bill 140. In particular, the member for Nickel Belt raised a number of concerns that I believe need to be addressed. One of the concerns she raised was a lack of commitment to support the not-for-profit sector in this bill. In fact, I have with me this evening a press release put out by OANHSS, which is a provincial association representing not-for-profit providers of long-term-care services and housing for seniors. In their press release, which was issued shortly after we finished our clause-by-clause review of the legislation, Donna Rubin, the CEO of the Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors, stated:

"We were very pleased to see that the unique governance structure of not-for-profit homes has now been acknowledged with more appropriate penalty provisions for municipalities and not-for-profit boards.'...

"A statement is also proposed for the preamble to the bill recognizing the government's commitment to not-for-profit delivery of long-term care.

"These were two key concerns for our members," said Donna Rubin, "and we are very pleased that the committee listened and made these important changes.... Not-for-profits have been a vital part of long-term care in this province for over a century. These amendments will go a long way to preserving and promoting our sector."

I think that speaks directly to some of the concerns that were raised by the member from Nickel Belt yesterday in debate, and I wanted to make sure that was clear.

We also heard some from the member for York South-Weston yesterday about a staffing and care standard and what he perceived to be a lack thereof. In fact, within the legislation, we have added, through an amendment, that "every licensee of a long-term-care home shall ensure that the home meets the staffing and care standards provided for in the regulations." Obviously, we're going to have further discussions on the regulations, as there was much discussion at the committee hearings on what should be included in a staffing and care standard. There



wasn't a lot of agreement between the various presenters as to which individuals who are working in a home should have their hours counted towards this staffing standard. We want to have those discussions with all of our stakeholders to ensure that we're including in that calculation the appropriate individuals and to ensure that we have an appropriate number determined as an average staffing and care standard for residents in our long-term-care homes.

You heard, I think, yesterday that the Conservatives, when they were in power, eliminated a staffing standard altogether. They eliminated a lot of standards in our long-term-care homes, but the staffing standard of 2.25 was completely eliminated by the previous Conservative government. We in fact have done recent calculations that indicate that an average of 2.86 hours of care is presently being given in our homes, and we're working with our stakeholders to determine what the appropriate staffing and care standard is for all of our homes across the province.

We heard some concern from some stakeholders leading up to the hearings and within the hearings about administrative requirements. Through the amendments that we made to Bill 140 during second reading, we have addressed some of those concerns. We've reduced the administrative requirements without compromising service to our residents. We've indicated that in packages of information that are being provided for family. It's only when material changes are made that we would have to revise those packages.

We've reduced the requirements around charting for individuals who are in our secure units. We've reduced our volunteer training to more of an orientation, less work-intensive for the staff but still ensuring that our volunteers have the appropriate orientation and are provided with the appropriate information in order to assist our residents in our homes.

I've heard a number of concerns raised about the membership of our family councils. Together with the family councils association over the last few weeks, we've been able to come up with a solution that I think is going to address their concerns. We have reduced membership to family councils to family members of the residents and persons of importance. We've heard some concern that family members of residents who have just deceased but were previous residents in the home should be allowed to continue, and so we're creating a mechanism that will allow each family council in each home to determine who should be part of their membership, as long as they're not part of a list of members that we've decided should not be, such as staff at the Ministry of Health and others who may have a conflict of interest in acting on a family council. So we've worked diligently with them, we've addressed their concerns and we've tried to get that information out to them as best we can over the last few weeks.

We have, as well, undertaken to provide in the amendments that we've passed a mechanism for recognizing excellence in long-term-care homes. We know that in the

620-some homes that we have across the province, there are some fabulous homes that are providing fabulous service to our residents, to our seniors, and we want to be able to recognize those and acknowledge the great work they're doing.

In finishing off my comments this evening, I just want to quote from a couple of stakeholder groups that were very supportive of our legislation. From the Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres, Georgina White, their director of policy and research, indicated at the time of the introduction, "I want to congratulate the government for bringing this long-anticipated bill forward and for the principles and values reflected in the legislation, specifically the recognition that a long-term-care home is a home where residents have the right to live 'with dignity and security, safety and comfort.' Long-term-care homes are not like acute care hospitals where people may spend a few days or weeks. They are homes where thousands of Ontarians go to live each year, often for the final months and years of their lives."

Again, from Pat Prentice, who is the executive director of the Ontario Association of Residents' Councils—and this, again, is an association that represents resident councils, our residents in our homes. This is what they had to say: "They—the board, made up entirely of residents of long-term-care homes—wish to have me express to you their overall pleasure with what they have seen and their great pride in having an important part in the process. They were particularly pleased with the rights of residents being used as the framework and the attention to issues about which they had previously commented. In short, they liked, for the most part, what they saw and they have very few suggestions, most of which could probably be regarded as tweaking." And tweaking we did, as we did the clause-by-clause, and we addressed a number of those small concerns that our residents' councils had from across the province.

I believe that what we have is a piece of legislation that really reflects a resident-focused framework for governing our long-term-care homes across the province. I'm very proud of the work that we've done, and I look forward to seeing this legislation pass in this House.

1920

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington):** I rise to speak to this bill. Some of the things I've heard tonight are in contradiction to some of the things I know. First of all, let me say that I, too, am very proud of the kind of care that residents receive in our long-term-care facilities. Folks who work there are very committed to, I think, a very difficult job, where residents transition from a very independent life to a life that's less independent, and a big change occurs. In some cases, they are even taken away from family and friends who are close to them and displaced and put in other communities.

I have great respect for the staff who work in these long-term-care facilities and provide that second family, that nurturing and that care that our seniors so well deserve. We have an aging population, and so we must prepare ourselves for the eventuality that any one of us



could find ourselves in one of these long-term-care facilities. I guess in that respect we have a vested interest to make sure that we establish the guidelines and the capacity in the system to be able to accept the aging population and the boomer population that's coming along.

Back in 1998, the Progressive Conservatives proudly announced the creation of 20,000 new beds in nursing homes and homes for the aged to add to the system. That was a substantial influx of new beds to take care of folks in the community. I think the driving factor was that people ought to have the right to remain in their own community as they age, close to family and friends who can support them through their last few years. And so in 1998, under the guidance of, at the time, Minister Elizabeth Witmer, we did announce 20,000 new beds, and that was the biggest influx of new beds in 10 years. In comparison, the number of beds that were added in this round—although welcome—I feel, given the promises that were made some three years ago, should have been substantially higher. In fact, the minister promised and vowed immediate action. He wanted to start a “revolution in long-term care.” Well, there has hardly been a revolution with this bill. In fact, very little new that we anticipated in this legislation has really come to pass.

I don't see how this bill strengthens the care of the residents. In fact, I have some concerns, because what I think is happening here is that the bill is creating an aura of suspicion about the folks who work in the homes. It fails, I think, to establish the fact that in long-term-care facilities there is a strong work ethic and a commitment to the seniors in our community. In the way the bill has presented itself, the folks who work in the long-term-care facility are depicted as folks who need mandatory whistle-blowing legislation. You would think that in our homes today there already is zero tolerance for abuse of elders, zero tolerance for abuse of the residents who are there. To have to mandate that kind of legislation leaves an aura that that is not happening in today's long-term-care and nursing facilities, that somehow it's slipping through the cracks and that the folks who look after the residents are not looking after them in the way that would be expected. I feel that that is a slight disrespect to the staff who look after our residents. I really believe that that part of the legislation is a little harsh.

There was a promise made that \$6,000 per resident was going to be added through the mandate of this Liberal government. That did not happen—yet another broken promise. There was also a promise made that there would be 20 minutes of additional care per day. That promise has been broken—yet another broken promise. I feel that, through these broken promises, the long-term-care and nursing community has missed yet another opportunity to do what they do best, and that is to look after our aging population, a population that is vulnerable, that is frail and that looks to us for support. They have given their due to our society, and it is incumbent on us to make sure that we provide in legislation for the best care possible for them.

I feel that the bill falls short because it has broken promises. There was a real opportunity here to do something meaningful to look after folks who have to leave the independence and comfort of their own homes and move into a facility where they will now be cared for. So I feel that, for those reasons, I cannot support the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate? Does any other member wish to speak?

Are you speaking or leaving?

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie—Lincoln):** Speaking.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Okay. The member for Erie—Lincoln.

**Interjection:** How long are you speaking for?

**Mr. Hudak:** Not more than 29 minutes and 50 seconds, I say to my colleague.

I'm pleased to rise on third reading of Bill 140. I think my colleague from Burlington and also my colleague from Oxford have spoken very well about the bill and the concerns we have.

It does show, and my friend from Burlington made some points about this, almost a hostile—maybe that's too strong a word—but an antagonistic approach that the McGuinty government takes towards some of the long-term-care homes, particularly those that are privately run charitable homes, and you can see that in this piece of legislation.

But interestingly, at a time of need at the homes toward funding for greater personal care, greater recreational care and improvement to the budget for food, the first two actions by the Dalton McGuinty government in the long-term-care industry were sneak inspections and a snitch line. The member from Nipissing was dispatched to sneak across the province to do surprise inspections of the homes. I think this showed an attitude of the McGuinty government that if you were a privately run facility, a charitable home, somehow the services you delivered to the residents were below snuff, were not beyond the suspicion of the government. So they set about with this sneaky procedure of going into homes on these surprise inspections.

Contrast, if you will, to the previous record of the Progressive Conservative government that saw 20,000 new long-term-care beds built in Ontario and some 16,000 of our oldest beds brought up to the highest and most modern standards.

Speaker, as you may know, in my riding of Erie—Lincoln there's Maple Park Lodge in Fort Erie, the Albright Manor in Beamsville, Edgewater and Grandview in Dunnville, the United Mennonite Home in Vineland, Northland Manor in Port Colborne, and the Shalom Manor in Grimsby, to name but some new homes or expansions of homes as a result of those initiatives of the Mike Harris government. We also saw expansions of funding.

The first two initiatives of the McGuinty government, after the health minister shed crocodile tears about how awful conditions were in the charitable homes and private homes, were to send out the parliamentary assistant with sneak inspections of the homes and then to bring in a snitch line. I don't know if the snitch line resulted in



better food quality for the residents or if the snitch line resulted in better-quality care. I certainly would expect that this type of antagonistic approach that Dalton McGuinty and his health minister have taken towards these homes undermines the outstanding work that those who are assisting residents in places like Albright or Shalom do on a regular basis, undermines the good work of the nurses in those homes, undermines the leadership of those who are volunteer board members.

I know the government, through Bill 140, paints a picture of nameless and faceless big corporations that run these homes, but in reality, when you look at Shalom Manor, Albright Manor, you have volunteer board members who do their utmost to ensure high-quality care for the residents of these homes. The attitude of the McGuinty government towards these individuals is highly unfortunate, to say the least.

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Let me read you, as I had on second reading, some of the concerns expressed by Shalom Manor in Grimsby, signed by the board of directors of Shalom Manor. They said:

"While we salute the spirit of the bill, we are, however, very concerned about the way in which your government"—this is a letter to the Minister of Health, Minister Smitherman—"proposes to apply the legislation.

"We are worried that the bill will result in a reduction in care and services for our residents. It places great emphasis on the enforcement of standards, and without question, homes must be held accountable. But the bill will require homes to spend a great deal more of their time and resources on compliance and documentation, and unless the government provides additional funding, homes will be forced to apply even more of their limited resources to meeting all the new administrative requirements. That means less money will be getting to the bedsides of residents."

I think there was quite a surprise as well in the sector when we had a budget that would make Bob Rae blush with all of its end-of-year spending. We certainly have heard about the slush fund run by the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship, which seemed more motivated with advancing the cause of the Ontario Liberal Party than helping immigrants and others settle into their communities, or seniors' groups, at a time when the rate of spending by the cheques issued by the Minister of Finance and the Premier outpaced Paul Martin on speed when we recollect the types of grants and commitments that Prime Minister Martin made at the time to try to salvage his short-lived prime ministership. Unfortunately, the long-term-care sector was virtually left out entirely of the most recent budget, these massive spending increases and end-of-year spending, I think, reflecting an unfortunate set of priorities of the McGuinty government.

In reality, the funding changes that have occurred have done very little to increase nursing care, for example, or the program support envelope for rehabilitation, activation, dietitians, etc. As well, the McGuinty government

seems to be in a dispute at the same time with the sector as to how many hours of care are actually administered in our long-term-care homes. The long-term-care sector will say that Ontario is at 2.5 hours worked per resident per day. The McGuinty government claims 2.8 hours. But that number is highly suspect because it includes time when staff is actually not working. Their lunches or overtime or breaks, the government conveniently counts into the number of hours to come up with a higher ratio. In reality, if I had to judge, I would side with the Ontario Long Term Care Association in saying that Ontario is only at 2.5 hours per resident.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** Two point eight six.

**Mr. Hudak:** My colleague from Peterborough parrots the notion of 2.86 hours. What he doesn't know—or maybe he does know and agrees with it—is that you're incorporating into that lunch hours, overtime hours when it's time and a half, or break hours. It's actually not an accurate measure to say that that includes hours worked per day. The long-term care association would argue that you shouldn't count lunches and break time and such, and therefore they come up with a ratio of 2.5 hours per day. So I would take issue with the member from Peterborough's comments. Maybe he will respond to that. But if I had to choose between Premier McGuinty and the Ontario Long Term Care Association when it comes to playing the numbers straight, I will side with the OLTCA every time.

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** One-nothing for Buffalo.

**Mr. Hudak:** One-nothing for Buffalo? I thank the Minister for Northern Development and Mines for letting us know that. As you may know, I grew up in Fort Erie, right across the border from Buffalo, New York. I'm happy for all the Senators fans out there. We were hoping from a much better performance from the Sabres, so it's good to hear that they're leading in game four this evening.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Hudak:** I'm not a season's ticket holder. I was when I was a kid; my father and a friend of his had season tickets. Then, tickets were much more affordable in the 1970s than they would be today, although the Sabres tickets are a good deal compared to other professional sports in large cities. But I digress.

As I expressed before at second reading on this legislation, I have great concerns about the underlying attitude of Bill 140. It tends to prejudice charitable homes or for-profit or even not-for-profit homes as being more motivated towards the bottom line than providing quality care. My experience has been quite the opposite. I think that people who work in the homes in my riding do an outstanding job and put at the top of their list, day in and day out, the quality of life of the residents who call these homes their home today.

I think it's unfortunate that the government has taken that approach of the sneak inspections and the snitch line. I think resources would be much better invested in increasing the hours of care, adjusting the food budget



and, I would hope, just like my colleague from Kitchener-Waterloo brought forward—a former health minister, Mrs. Witmer—investing in the B and C beds to raise them to the highest standards. I'm certainly very proud of the investments made by the previous government to build new homes, to expand existing ones and to convert the D-level facilities to the highest standards. I have not seen much more than an inch of progress from the current government in that regard. I certainly hope that we will see, in the time ahead, better investments in converting our oldest facilities to the most modern and highest standards.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Hudak:** We certainly did not attack the people working in the charitable homes or the for-profit or not-for-profit homes, as Minister Smitherman has done, accusing them of providing low-quality care. I reject that fundamentally. It's very regrettable the minister has made those accusations. I hope that while Bill 140 is still on the floor, we'll have either the minister or a member of his caucus apologize for that attack on the sector.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** As I was saying, I want to have an opportunity to put a few things on the record in regard to this particular issue. Of course, I'm trying to find all of those wonderful speaking notes I had earlier, and God knows what I did with them. Here they are; they're right here. They're underneath my flying magazine. Over here is my flying magazine and the latest book I'm reading, the Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople. You should read it; it's great reading.

I want to put on the record a few issues in regard to this particular issue as it affects people across this province and specifically people in my own constituency. All of us have had an opportunity to be invited by long-term-care facilities within our ridings. I know last winter all of us got the same invites, and we had the opportunity to go and visit. The first thing I want to say is that the staff who work in long-term-care facilities are dedicated people who are trying the best they can, given the circumstances, to provide the kind of care that they've got to provide to people who live in our long-term-care institutions. But one thing that is very clear is that there are a couple of alarming indicators that we're starting to see within the system, and I want to speak to a couple of those.

First of all, one of the things we're seeing is that there was a promise made by this government to try to deal with providing the proper amount of funding for long-term-care institutions. One of the promises made in the previous election, and by the Liberals in opposition, was to move a \$6,000 increase per resident into funding so that long-term-care facilities can have the money they need to increase the food allowance, to provide better staff coverage, etc., to provide services for communities. What really struck me as I went from the Foyer des Pionniers to Extendicare homes, and to the North Centennial Manor in Kapuskasing and the Golden Manor in Timmins—all great institutions—is that there's a lot of

part-time staff within these organizations. The problem is that the long-term-care facilities don't have the funding they need to provide the full-time staff numbers that they need in order to run these homes, and as a result, there's a lot of part-time staff. This represents a problem, because what you tend to see is a person who works part-time, let's say, at the Golden Manor or at Extendicare, and they're working in another health care facility somewhere. So you have a lot of situations where somebody might be working in the hospital on a part-time basis and working in a long-term-care institution also on a part-time basis, or possibly within a couple of institutions in the long-term-care sector.

**1940**

For example, in Kapuskasing I met a number of employees who worked both at Extendicare and at North Centennial Manor. You say, "Well, what's the problem with that?" First of all, the bigger problem over the longer term is, imagine if you have an issue of pandemic in the province. It is a way of being able to move contamination from one health facility to another. I just want to say for the record again that we need to be very careful to provide the kind of funding we need so that we can have permanent staff, so that we can isolate these units as best we can to prevent the possibility of the transference of various flus and epidemics from one institution to the other. When you have multiple staff who are part-time working in different institutions, it runs a greater risk of infecting one home with the bugs that you might find in another home.

So I would say that one of the things I think we need to look at is this whole issue of funding. We know the government had promised that they would raise funding by at least \$6,000 per year.

The other big issue is the level of care that was promised in regard to what we would provide when it comes to nursing care within institutions. I remember, because I believe at the time the Liberals had promised two or two and a half hours of nursing care to residents on a daily basis, so that we're able to provide the level of care that we need to to our residents. The government in the previous election had made that promise of 2.25 hours to the level-of-care funding envelope, that we should be doing it. To date, we don't see that. There was an opportunity in this bill, I thought, based on the consensus that we saw from various people who presented to the committee, that we were able to raise the level of care to 3.5 hours. Even if the government had just met its own target of 2.25, we'd be a lot further ahead than what we are now. I'm just saying, the effect of that is that residents in long-term-care facilities—mostly seniors, but others—are not able to get the level of care that they need within their institutions.

Here's what we see. You walk into a long-term-care facility and one of the things that you see immediately is that if a resident of a long-term-care facility should choose that they want a bath on a more frequent basis—let's say every day or every two days, because there are reasons why seniors don't bathe every day; they're not as



active as we are, but still people want to be able to bathe—they wouldn't be able to, if they need assistance, because you don't have the level of care within the institutions to be able to provide that. So I think one of the things that is really lacking in regard to this legislation is the commitment that the government has shown in keeping its promise of the last election. They could have, in this legislation, dealt with the level of care.

The other thing that I want to put on the record—again, I had an opportunity to speak last week with Colleen Landers, a resident of the city of Timmins who has been involved in health care for many years. Now retired, she's becoming very involved in the long-term-care system and is involved with the family organizations that help seniors within homes. She started a petition in the city of Timmins and was in my office last Friday calling on this government to move up the amount of money that we utilize to provide meals to people who live in long-term-care facilities. Currently, we're getting about \$5.50 per resident to prepare meals. This means to say that we don't have the kind of money to provide the nutrition we would like to provide seniors. What Colleen has started, along with others, is calling on this provincial government to move to increase the amount of money that we have now from about \$5.50 per resident up to \$7, which would be a step in the right direction. It's maybe not as much as people want, but it would allow us to have the kind of money that we need to provide the dietary needs of the people who live within institutions. On this current \$5.50, you're really in a situation where, in the end, you're not able to provide the kind of food that you want.

Unlike in the past, where residents every week could be used to seeing a turkey or roast beef or roast pork or whatever it might be—a mixed kind of food—now what you're seeing is more like chicken-à-la-king food preparation, with a lot more starches in their diet. I don't think that, at the end of the day, is good for seniors. I support what Colleen has started, and I would ask—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bisson:** Well, the dietitians are the ones who came into the office to complain about this. They're saying that we need to do something to raise the level of care, raise the amount of money utilized towards funding the allowances for food.

The other thing is that the Legion had made quite a few representations in regard to the issue of not having appointed an ombudsman for seniors within the system. This is something that the government had promised, something we were expecting and unfortunately hadn't been done.

Those are just some of the points that I wanted to make in this debate. I look forward to others who want to participate.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby-Ajax):** I'm pleased to be able to join my colleagues from Oxford, Burlington and Erie-Lincoln with respect to this time allocation motion on Bill 140. For those people who may be watching this debate this evening, I should note that this is the

third time allocation in three days. On Monday we debated time allocation on Bill 103, the police complaints bill. Last evening, Tuesday evening, we debated time allocation on Bill 69, the regulatory modernization bill, and tonight we're dealing with time allocation on Bill 140, the long-term-care bill.

We've had numerous other bills that have preceded that that have also been time-allocated in this session, the most notable being the budget bill and then the electoral reform bill, which is alleging to be dealing with democratic reform in the electoral process but of course has been time-allocated and is completely undemocratic, as far as I'm concerned, and indefensible.

You have to wonder why all three of these bills are being time-allocated in the last three days. I would suggest that this has a lot more to do with the fact that we've got an election coming in October and that the members of the Liberal government are more intent on optics than in making sure that they take the time to get this legislation right. Isn't that the reason why we're here—to be able to have a reasoned and considered debate on all of the issues on the legislation that has come forward before us? It's our duty as members of the opposition to be able to comment on these bills and to represent the views of our constituencies, as all of the other members are to represent the constituencies they represent across Ontario so that we can make sure that we get bills that represent the interests of everyone and are in everyone's best interest.

I would suggest that we're really doing a disservice, particularly with respect to this bill, Bill 140, on long-term-care homes. We're doing a disservice to the long-term-care home operators; we're doing a disservice to the seniors in our community; and, ultimately, I would submit that we're doing a disservice to everyone in our community because we're all responsible for vulnerable people in our community, and certainly many of the seniors who are in long-term-care facilities fall into that category.

I would like to say, before I comment more specifically on the nature of this bill, that as a number of the other members have indicated, I am very proud of the services for people in long-term-care homes that are being provided by the long-term-care operators in my riding of Whitby-Ajax. I have had the opportunity to visit many of the long-term-care homes in my riding. In fact, I was given an invitation, as I believe many other members were, to spend some time there. I spent half a day there with the staff. I saw the kind of work they're doing and the kind of dedication they have to the people who are under their care, and it's not easy work. As everyone knows, it's hard work; it's heavy lifting, long hours and not a whole lot of appreciation, certainly from some members of the public. But the people in those care facilities, of course are very grateful for the care that they receive. I'm very proud of the work they do and I want to support them, as all of the other members want to support the long-term-care homes in their ridings.



But I have to say that I have heard from a lot of my constituents in Whitby–Ajax about this bill, and they're not happy. They're not happy about a lot of things to do with this bill. Though time isn't going to permit me to go into a lot of detail about them this evening, there are just a few things that I would like to raise, many of which have been raised by other members in their debate on this issue.

One is the lack of capital investment in B- and C-level homes. This is something that was certainly expected by many long-term-care home operators in my riding, one being a non-profit called Fairview Lodge, which is the one I visited. It has been operating in Whitby for a number of years and provides exemplary care, but they were reasonably hoping to get some money for some capital repairs and infrastructure to upgrade the homes, because this is a facility that is well over 50 years old. While they've done their best to keep it in good repair over all those years, it's still showing some of its age. It needs some work done on it, and it also needs to be renewed and brought up to date with current standards, because people have different expectations about where they're going to live now than they did 50 years ago. So they did expect that there would be some money to allow for them to do that, but that's not happening.

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I'd like to compare that to what was announced by the previous government under Premier Harris in 1998, when there was a \$1.2-billion infusion of capital into long-term-care facilities in order to upgrade the D-level homes and to provide 20,000 new beds for people in nursing homes and homes for the aged. Now, that is a significant capital investment. This was before my time in this Legislature, but I think that was something that was certainly appreciated by members of the public and really made a significant improvement in both the existing homes and in creating new spaces for residents who need long-term-care facilities. So we're very proud of that legacy, and I think it certainly compares very favourably with the announcements that are being made as part of Bill 140, which aren't going to go nearly far enough to meet the needs of seniors in our community.

The other is the lack of investment, in addition to upgrading the facilities, in creating more long-term-care beds. I have to say that you can quote statistics all you want, but it's the personal stories that you hear, the people I've met with in my riding office, in my community office, who have told me some stories that are really quite sad. When you reflect upon what our seniors have contributed to our communities over the years, how they've worked hard for many years, and now when they need to be supported by their communities and need a place to live, we find that many people are not being allowed to live in their home communities anymore. When you get older, any kind of change is difficult, but particularly if you're going to be separated from your spouse. I've had several situations that have been really quite heartbreaking, where I've had seniors, both of whom are not in great health—I had one person who

came to see me whose husband, as a result of a stroke that he suffered, was placed in a long-term-care facility in Cobourg while his wife was living in Whitby. She has Parkinson's disease and was reliant on her sister to drive her once a week to see her husband. It was an hour's drive away. This was very hard on both of them, naturally, and really, I think, contributed to a decline in the wife's state of health, because stress, as you know, is really difficult to manage when you have physical issues like Parkinson's disease. Even though we did our best—and I know all of the staff did their best in order to place this gentleman back in his home community—the fact of the matter is, it was another six months before they were able to place him back in his home community in Oshawa.

So I appreciate the efforts that are being made by the placement organizations in trying to place people back in their home communities, but the fact of the matter is that the beds simply aren't there. In a rapidly growing area such as my communities of Whitby–Ajax, where the population growth, the residential growth, is increasing rapidly, so is the need for seniors to have long-term-care facilities to move to. So I would submit that there is a lot more that needs to be done to allow our seniors to be able to live in dignity in their home communities with all of the supports that they need to have around them. I'm afraid that Bill 140 does not do that. In fact, this time allocation motion that's being brought before us to invoke closure and to shut off the debate on this really does a disservice to everyone concerned, and I think that's sad for everybody in our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to speak on this.

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** This is a sad, sad evening. Quite frankly, the member for Whitby–Ajax has just reiterated, with a certain amount of compassion, the reality of the situation. This, first of all, is a time allocation motion, which is most tragic. It's really subtly not giving voice to the seniors, the people who built this province. Her statements and her testimony to the people she has visited with and the people she speaks for is proof that the government is not listening.

They're prepared to go to the people, to call an election, after time-allocating very, very important, often troublesome, bills. On Bill 184 today, the Endangered Species Act, they refused to have public hearings. Our critic, Norm Miller, and others were prepared to give up any amount of time to go to the parts of Ontario that are most affected by that bill.

Here we have another bill, and I recognize that Monique Smith has done some work on this bill. She probably knows and probably wants to do the right thing, but she is being forced in time allocation to silence the voice of opposition: completely incomprehensible.

When I look around my riding of Durham, I think of the five or six homes, and I want to put on the record the names of the people, names and faces of real people and real families who are being challenged because of all of the inadequacies of this government, not the least of which is that there aren't enough doctors. There aren't



enough supports in the community. These are vulnerable families, whether it's children in need, young families—no doctor. It's troubling.

I can only start to focus on Bill 140 here in the interest of getting on the record the voices of my constituents. First of all, this is all about the residents of long-term care. This is their home, often in the latter stages of their life. In Bowmanville I have Strathaven Lifecare Centre, which has had some troubles, obviously, and is now under the direction of the province of Ontario. I think it went into receivership because of inadequate funding. I met just recently with the community committee and Patrick Brown, the residents' committee president. I was there, I visited, I spoke with, I listened, I watched and I felt their care, and I commend the staff, who are run off their feet. I'll read a petition later. I've received thousands of petitions.

This is probably the most important thing for a person, probably with very few exceptions, who is the oldest here tonight. I say that, looking towards that in the future, the way it's being managed under the McGuinty government, it's not a place you'd like to be, Mr. Speaker. You might be in roughly the same age group.

But I've also been in Marnwood Lifecare Centre recently. There was an issue with respect to—this is their home. This isn't an issue about me being pro- or anti-smoking, but the issue there was that these elderly people were being forced by this thoughtless legislation on anti-smoking—which is bad. I agree. But they made no accommodation for these people. Just by the slice of the knife, they have eliminated some privileges of some of them. This home had spent considerable money building a smoking room. Then the regulations came out, and they weren't allowed to smoke within a certain distance. These are elderly people often in walkers, often in wheelchairs, needing supports, who had an addictive problem—and I think that's unfortunate, but this is at the latter stage of their life—being forced out into the cold, potentially. So I went and listened to them and I explained the regulation. It wasn't Marnwood Lifecare Centre. Tracey Werheid, the administrator, and her staff there were trying to have the people understand that they had to obey the McGuinty law. They didn't understand. "This is our home."

They feel so threatened and so fragile that I left very saddened. But if they only knew part of Bill 140, how further threatened they are in terms of the crush of this bill, the inadequacy of this bill. This is one of the long-term-care homes that is threatened under the classification of the four types of homes. You would know that there are A homes. They're the ones that were built, as was said by the member from Whitby-Ajax, by Elizabeth Witmer as Minister of Health, as well as the Premier at the time, Mike Harris, latterly—but 20,000 new long-term-care beds.

A large amount of money was invested, and that amount of money was to upgrade another 16,000 beds so that persons would have the decency and the respect they deserve in that stage of their life. This meant that it was

handicapped-accessible with a wheelchair or a walker, with lifts for the baths and other kinds of supports for staff and patients to have dignity and convenience in their life. I just explained to them the issue there, and I felt so bad.

As I said, I was quite shaken after visiting Marnwood, and also Fosterbrooke, which is one of the most caring homes I've been in. Tina Bravos and the staff there are working in less-than-adequate facilities. I have to say that on the record. This is another of the homes being threatened under the limited licensing provision of this bill. Bill 140 does nothing to help those residents, those families, those staff or the people in that community who, in many cases, work voluntarily. It's ministerial staff; these are people of the church and others who come in and are care providers.

#### 2000

One of the others is the Community Nursing Home in Port Perry. Heather Cooper is the director of care there; she's very caring, a professional nurse. I can just tell by the tone in the residents' committee meetings held there that they're also troubled by this legislation.

Wynfield is in Oshawa, which is part of my riding; it's Katherine Jackson there. This is a newer home, so in this home they've got the gadgets, they've got the stuff. But even in this case, they were operating under some assumptions. Trusting the Premier's promise of \$6,000 in additional future funding, they went ahead with their business plan, trusting the leadership of Dalton McGuinty. What did they do? Nothing—absolutely failed. In fact, if you look at it, it's about 50 cents per person per day—50 cents. It wouldn't give one minute of additional care, what was in the budget. It's tragic.

I am going to mention Karen Sullivan from the Ontario Long Term Care Association and the work she has done to try to educate, respectfully, about the issues of this community and their families, the caregivers and the staff. This is one of the materials. This isn't a prop; it's one of the materials. "It's About Time" is the theme, and it's about long-term care. It's the Ontario Long Term Care Association. "The passion behind the compassion." That is true. It takes a special person to work in those facilities. You have to have a calling to have the patience and the compassion to be there for that individual—someone's mother, someone's father, someone's son, someone's daughter. It's at that level that they just seem to be—they've time-allocated it. They're refusing to listen.

I want to conclude my remarks by saying, on a personal level—and I hope not to break down during this. I've mentioned my mother-in-law, Madge Hall, many times. She's a lovely lady. She'll be 90 this October. Her daughter predeceased her and was a wonderful person as well: Molly Hall—Molly O'Toole at one time. Madge lives in Centennial Place in Millbrook. It is a wonderful facility, but again they are operating under the shadow of this legislation. There's very intimidating language in this bill, which some may have mentioned, on the liabilities downloaded to the owner without additional funding, whether for the meals or for the care or for the



staff—none of the main ingredients promised during the election, along with a number of other promises.

This campaign card tells the story: “The Ontario government has forgotten. Help the government remember.” This card was a powerful reminder of what we’re doing to our parents or someone else’s, our grandparents, etc. Quite frankly, I would say they do their best with the limited resources they’ve been given.

In conclusion, I’ll read this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario will not meet the needs of its aging population and ensure access to hospital services unless long-term-care homes can provide the care and services that residents need; and

“Whereas staff are now run off their feet trying to keep up and homes are unable to provide the full range of care and programs that residents need or the menu choices that meet their expectations; and

“Whereas dietary, housekeeping and other services that residents and their families value are being put at risk by operating costs; and

“Whereas some 35,000 residents still live in older homes,” with three and four in a room, inaccessible washrooms—Mr. Speaker, I am completely—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Further debate? Does any other member wish to speak?

Ms. Di Cocco has moved government notice of motion 373. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say “aye.”

All those opposed, say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 2005 to 2015.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour will please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Colle, Mike  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Gerretsen, John  
Hoy, Pat  
Leal, Jeff

Levac, Dave  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Oraziotti, David  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Ramal, Khalil

Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Sergio, Mario  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Wilkinson, John  
Zimmer, David

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Arnott, Ted  
Bisson, Gilles  
Elliott, Christine

Hudak, Tim  
Martiniuk, Gerry  
O'Toole, John

Savoline, Joyce

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 27; the nays are 7.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Orders of the day.

**Hon. Ms. Di Cocco:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say “aye.”

All those opposed, say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This House is adjourned until 10 of the clock, Thursday, May 17.

*The House adjourned at 2018.*

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(Hansard)**

**Thursday 17 May 2007**

**Jeudi 17 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Greffière  
Deborah Deller





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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 17 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 17 mai 2007

*The House met at 1000.  
Prayers.*

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

### MINING TAX

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government must do more to protect Ontario jobs and, as a first step, should repeal the section of Bill 187, An Act respecting budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters, 2007, that imposes a 13% tax on diamond mines.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Pursuant to standing order 96, Mr. Hardeman, you have up to 10 minutes.

**Mr. Hardeman:** I'm pleased to bring forward this resolution today because, sadly, over the past four years, jobs have not been the priority of the McGuinty government. Ontario has lost 137,000 manufacturing jobs since the beginning of 2005. Over 13,000 of those manufacturing jobs were lost last month alone. Clearly, there is a problem that the Liberal government should be addressing.

These are not just numbers. They're real people who are struggling to make ends meet without a paycheque. They're people who are going to have to go to their savings or take out loans to pay their mortgage, and the government is ignoring them. They are focused on slush funds and trying to prop up their promise-breaking government instead of taking action to help the people of Ontario.

Last week in my riding, 55 workers at the Collins and Aikman plant received layoff notices. The company has said that by the end of July they will have about 150 people laid off. When I met with the Oxford labour council last week, the number one issue they raised was the loss of manufacturing jobs.

In December 2005, my colleague from Halton introduced a resolution calling on this government to develop a jobs plan. Although the resolution was passed unanimously, there has been no action by the McGuinty government to create that plan. I want to point out the part of the resolution that called for the plan to come forward immediately.

I recently did a survey of business people in my riding to see what were some of the biggest challenges facing

businesses today. I asked them whether they needed a jobs plan, and 93.3% of the people who responded said they felt a jobs plan was "somewhat" or "very" necessary. In the same survey, 86.7% of respondents said that Ontario taxes are too high.

So what does this government do? When an international company chooses to invest in Ontario and create jobs, the McGuinty government, without consultation or warning, more than doubles the taxes on Ontario's first diamond mine; they went from 5% to 13%.

I know that a lot of people think of diamonds as a luxury item and aren't that concerned by the increased tax. But what we are really talking about isn't diamonds; it's jobs and investment. De Beers is spending almost \$1 billion in Ontario. That is a lot of money going into our economy. There are construction jobs building the processing plant, workshops, winter roads, a warehouse and accommodations. In addition, there will be 400 jobs when the mine is in full operation, and those jobs will have many more spinoff jobs. Those 400 people need new cars to get to work, clothing, food and housing, and now they can afford to buy a few extra items. All of that creates jobs. That is what the McGuinty government just doubled the taxes on.

This is an area of the north that really needs those jobs and needs the money in the local economy. In response to the tax increase, the mayor of Moosonee, Wayne Taipale, asked, "Are they trying to kill the north? What are they trying to do? Stop the development?"

Dalton McGuinty tries to tell us that he's taking this money to help the people of Ontario, but the people of northern Ontario will tell you that the help they need is getting and keeping jobs in northern Ontario. The First Nations will tell you that they are already being helped through their agreement with De Beers and that this is their money that the government is taking.

In fact, Mike Carpenter, chief of the Attawapiskat First Nation, said:

"We believe that this increase constitutes little more than a tax grab by the McGuinty government, and it will not benefit our First Nation or others throughout northern Ontario.

"De Beers Canada's diamond mine is the first and only opportunity our community has ever had to break free of our soul-destroying poverty. This diamond royalty tax will steal the future of our children. Premier McGuinty ... must honour his government's original agreement with us and take back this tax."

The Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association passed a resolution that petitioned the government "to



amend the Ontario Mining Act to include diamonds on the same royalty basis as all other minerals.”

Perhaps, if the government had consulted on this change, they would have heard these views and realized that this was a mistake. It was done with so little consultation that the Minister of Northern Development and Mines didn't even know about the increase before it happened.

By increasing this tax without warning, Dalton McGuinty sent a message to the international mining and business community. It says, “We don't want your investment in Ontario.” It says, “If you invest in Ontario, be prepared, for your tax rate could double overnight with no warning.” It says that businesses looking to invest here can't trust the Ontario government.

This is one of the issues for De Beers: the ability to count on the government to keep their commitment. In a presentation to the finance committee, James Gowans, president and CEO of De Beers Canada said, “We thought we had a commitment from the Ontario government as late as when Premier McGuinty and three cabinet ministers reiterated their commitment to the royalties from the Ontario Mining Tax Act, and in fact the remote royalty when they were involved in the groundbreaking ceremonies at the end of June last year.”

McGuinty actually boasted about the mining rates being among the lowest in Canada in a news release at the Victor mine groundbreaking.

You would think that would have meant something. You can see how this company might be shocked that, less than a year later, the same Premier would more than double the tax rate. At this point, De Beers has put a lot of money into the Victor mine project and is probably here to stay. But the company has been spending on exploration in the north, looking for more mine locations and all the jobs that come with them. After this announcement, they are reconsidering that decision.

Sadly, members of the Legislature probably aren't shocked to hear that McGuinty broke another promise and another commitment. We know that he has broken many promises to the people of Ontario, so one more probably doesn't matter that much to him. We all remember 2003, when he looked us in the eye and said, “I will not raise your taxes.” He didn't tell that to just a few people. He didn't tell it just to the Legislature. He did it with a commercial on television. He told every single Ontarian, “I will not raise your taxes.” It sends a signal to companies—and, incidentally, the people believed him when he said that; a lot of people believed him when he said that. But it sends a signal to the companies that are considering investing here, now that he has broken all these promises. In an article in the Sault Star, the mayor of Timmins, Tom Laughren said, “There is a lot of exploration going on in the north, specifically for diamonds. My fear is it may trigger people to look elsewhere just because the tax regime will be uncertain.”

1010

In Oxford, we have been lucky to attract some international investment, including a new Toyota plant that is

currently under construction. There was a lot of competition for that plant. If Toyota had thought that their taxes could more than double without warning, I'm not sure they would have chosen to locate in Ontario, and all those jobs could have gone somewhere else. There is no point in the Premier spending taxpayers' dollars on international junkets when he is going to treat companies that invest here like that.

On this side of the House, we know how important jobs are. We are willing to do the work to bring them to Ontario and to keep them here. There is no need for the government to go ahead with doubling the taxes on this mine. They can admit they were wrong and show the international community that this is still a good place to invest.

Repealing the section of Bill 187, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters, that imposes a 13% tax on diamond mines is a good first step in protecting Ontario jobs. But it is just a first step. The government needs to do more to reduce red tape and make this the kind of province where business can grow, and international businesses can choose to invest. We know that in today's global economy, companies have a lot of choices on where they will invest. You need to be competitive to attract investment, and part of that is providing stability.

Our leader, John Tory, has committed that, if elected, our government would do the right thing and roll back this tax increase to protect those jobs and bring more jobs and investment to Ontario. I urge all members in this Legislature to support this resolution and send the message that Ontario is open for business and we want jobs and investment here.

I want to say again, I think it's time we send a message out to the world that when Ontario makes a commitment, Ontario stands behind the commitment. It's not good enough to say something to get elected and then renege on it when the time comes to deliver on that. I think people who invest here have a right to expect that when they are told what the tax rate will be, that tax rate will not, without consultation, without any further ado, be more than doubled, from 5% to 13%. That is almost a 150% increase in tax rates without telling them it was going to happen. I think it's atrocious. I also think it takes away the confidence people have in investing in our economy and building the jobs that the people of Oxford county and the people of the rest of Ontario need to ensure a lifestyle that we have grown accustomed to and we want to keep.

Thank you very much for the time, Mr. Speaker. We look forward to further debate and to the support of all members of the House to start the building of that confidence back in our future.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I do not believe we have quorum in the House at present.

*The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.*

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** A quorum is now present, Speaker.



**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Mississauga West, you have the floor.

**Mr. Delaney:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

It's a pleasure to talk about the resolution by my colleague from Oxford, a gentleman whose company I enjoy and whose opinions I respect in general, but I often wondered, why did he just read the speaking notes that people sent in? Here is a member whose riding is now going to be the home of the world's most sought-after auto plant. When Toyota Motor had a chance to locate its new plant, everyone in the world wanted this particular plant. The Europeans wanted it; the Americans wanted it. But the difference is that when Toyota had a chance to build that plant, Toyota wanted Woodstock; Toyota wanted Ontario. They chose to build an auto plant and to build jobs and to build careers and to build families and to build communities in that member's riding—and that member has been decrying the flight of jobs, even while his own riding is a net beneficiary.

Now, this is not the early 20th century and it's not the industrial revolution. The reality in which we live, in the 21st century, is that the nature of work continues to evolve, and that change has generally been a good one. It's been from work that focuses on muscle to work that focuses on brainpower. That's one area in which Ontario has a unique advantage. Thanks to this government's five-year, \$6.2-billion investment in post-secondary education, we have been growing the kind of people that the member for Oxford is going to be employing in the plant that Toyota has been building in his riding. We've been growing people who can add value to what's done with machine work.

1020

It's not as if Ontario is the only jurisdiction in the world that is struggling with manufacturing jobs. Automation, computerization and the changing nature of the type of goods that people are buying are costing every jurisdiction in the world the old-fashioned factory-type jobs. Our major colleague—I don't like to look upon them as a competitor, because we share more in common with the state of Michigan than we differ—Michigan lost far more jobs than Ontario last year. We take no joy in Michigan losing jobs, any more than they do in Ontario losing jobs. About one out of every nine manufacturing jobs in the United States has left. In Japan, one out of six manufacturing jobs has disappeared. It's not as if they're vanishing off the face of the map. It's that they're being replaced by value-added jobs. The types of jobs that Ontario has been losing are ones that generally pay in the range of \$8 to \$15 an hour, but the net 322,500 new jobs—net new jobs—that Ontario has created generally pay in the neighbourhood of \$15 to \$40 an hour. Yes, we're losing low-end jobs, but on a net basis we are gaining more jobs, and those jobs that we are gaining are better-paying, better-trained jobs. Those are the ones that we should be protecting.

Here are some of the changes that the member for Oxford perhaps overlooked: Ontario's budget is in balance. It's going to stay in balance, God willing and no

major economic storm on the horizon. It is sustainably in balance. We're not having to sell highways. We're not having to sell assets. Ontario's budget is in balance because this government has finally got a grip on Ontario's finances. It's been in balance for two years. It's been in balance without having to use the reserve, and as Ontario continues to go forward, the budget that the member was criticizing is ensuring that Ontario's finances will stay in balance whether or not we need the reserve.

Those are some of the areas in which Ontario has progressed. Those are some of the reasons that people should have confidence in the Ontario that they live in, confidence that it's going to remain a leader, confidence that Ontario as we know it is going to continue to be Canada's job driver and economic leader for generations to come.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to join in the debate this morning. This morning we're debating Ernie Hardeman's resolution. I won't read the whole thing, but it calls to repeal the section of Bill 187, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters, 2007, that imposes a 13% tax on diamond mines.

The Liberal 2007 budget introduced a new diamond mining tax that could see current and future projects pay out up to 13% of the total value of diamonds mined in the province. Prior to the budget, diamond mines were subject to the same tax rates under the Mining Tax Act, which includes a stipulation that a mining project in northern Ontario only pay 5%.

I attended the Meet the Miners reception here a month or so ago, and it really demonstrated the business reaction to this new tax. Most of the time, these receptions are very light affairs. This was held down in the legislative dining room, and De Beers had a booth set up there. I arrived just as the minister was starting to speak. He talked about how he consulted with industry before, after and on a continuing basis.

Right after the Minister of Northern Development and Mines spoke—that's Mr. Bartolucci—then a De Beers representative spoke. He was trying to be nice. He was trying, as people usually do at these receptions, to be polite and not bring up too much politics, but he just couldn't help himself. He kept coming back to the fact that this tax was brought in on the industry without any warning and the effect that this tax will have. He talked about the tax as a Third World tax. He also pointed to their booth, and said, "Go have a look at those diamonds." There is only one diamond mine about to open in Ontario and that's the De Beers Victor Project west of Attawapiskat. He said, "Have a look at the diamonds, because this may be the only diamond mine that ever opens in Ontario." That's the sort of effect this tax can have. When you surprise business, when you change the rules in the middle of the game, after they've invested \$1 billion to find the mine and develop it, then they don't feel safe in terms of investing future money in projects. And not only that, but they make their plans on a business case based on stable taxes.



This representative of De Beers went on to say that he's got e-mails. At that point, he had many e-mails from his head office sitting there and he just didn't know how he was going to answer them, because he had sold the company on investing in Ontario based on the fact that we have stable government, that we have stable taxation, and here this government, the McGuinty government, goes and changes the rules after the company invests \$1 billion, just as the diamond mine is about to open. It really was an underhanded trick that they pulled on this company. So he had all these e-mails sitting there and he didn't know what to say. He didn't know how he was going to respond, because he had sold the company on investing in Ontario based on the fact that there have historically been stable taxation policies.

It's not just De Beers that were surprised by this move. First Nations: Attawapiskat Chief Mike Carpenter, Grand Chief Stan Louttit of the Mushkegowuk Tribal Council, and Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Stan Beardy have all expressed their concern, because the Attawapiskat First Nation has negotiated an impact benefit agreement with De Beers. Having been to Attawapiskat with a legislative committee, it's an impoverished community. This mine means hope to that community and hope to other remote northern First Nations. This change, without any consultation with First Nations, is not going to benefit them.

Attawapiskat Chief Mike Carpenter says this diamond royalty is a step backwards. "We have been trying for years to get some form of revenue sharing and instead of moving forward on that file, the Ontario government decides to take the money themselves. That means there's less money to go around." That was Attawapiskat Chief Mike Carpenter.

Finally, in the short five minutes I have to speak, I'd like to point out that this is yet another broken promise by the McGuinty Liberal government. Dalton McGuinty was one the one who looked into the TV cameras and filmed the ads saying, "I won't raise your taxes," and that he wouldn't bring in any new taxes. Not only did they do that in this case, but they did it without consultations with First Nations and without warning to industry. It's very much a short-sighted tax grab that will hurt this province, that will hurt northern Ontario, and that's why I support the resolution put forward by Mr. Hardeman wholeheartedly.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins—James Bay):** I've got to say that I'm not exactly thrilled and happy to be here this morning debating this particular issue, because I would never have thought that any government in this province would have done what this government did in the last budget in regard to changing the game when it comes to how we apply royalties to mining projects in Ontario.

Every government up to now has understood that mining is a very expensive business. Let me make it really simple. If you're trying to find one mine somewhere in northern Ontario, you have to do a lot of exploration. There has to be a lot of money spent and a lot of drilling done on numerous properties in order to, if you're lucky,

find a property after spending literally millions of dollars on drilling.

In the case of the De Beers Victor Project up in Attawapiskat, that project is probably about a 25-year cycle from the time that we first noticed diamonds in the sediment, or what would indicate diamonds in the sediment of the Attawapiskat River, to the time that we actually spend literally millions of dollars in order to do some exploration up there, to getting the mine. There are literally in the hundreds of millions of dollars spent in exploration to find one mine.

The point that the government seems to not realize is that if you change the game on the mining companies when it comes to what they understood the cost of royalties would be when they decided to invest and build a mine to the time that you open it up, you're really sending a message out to the investment community that this is not a good place for them to do investments because the government is unstable when it comes to its taxation regime.

The big problem here—there are a number of problems, but I want to try to lay them out. The first one is that De Beers made a decision to invest literally \$1 billion to build the Victor diamond project based on the economics of the project. Included in the economics of the project was the 5% royalty.

1030

The Premier of Ontario was up in Attawapiskat. In fact, my good friend over here, Al Simard, might have been there, because he works on construction up at the De Beers project. He basically went to Attawapiskat, to the Victor diamond project, was there for the groundbreaking ceremony of the construction of the mine and said at the time that one of the reasons De Beers made the decision to go ahead was because Ontario had a royalty policy that if you built a mine in a remote location, you didn't pay 10% royalty, you paid 5% royalty. That was one of the key reasons De Beers made the investment.

The Premier recognized that when he did the groundbreaking. That's why it's so surprising that his Minister of Finance—and ultimately him—have decided to increase the diamond royalties from 5% to 13%, thus tripling the royalties.

The first point is that the Premier has done a flip-flop yet again: has gone up to the site, said that the reason the project is going ahead is because of the 5% royalty tax, and at the end of the day the government flip-flopped and decided to do completely the opposite of what they said to De Beers. I wonder if any diamond company would actually open a project knowing that the royalty would triple. I think it would have weighed very heavily against a decision to go ahead.

The other thing is this whole sense of the change of game. You guys have decided, two thirds into the process of constructing a mine, to change the taxation system in order to take advantage of the situation. I think that sends a very bad message, and I was talked to earlier, in regard to what that means for those people in the mining industry.



I want to put this really simply. The Victor Project—does anybody know where the Victor Project is, by the way? It's up on the James Bay coast, west of Attawapiskat. There are no roads, no infrastructure. It's basically out in the middle of a swamp. To build a mine in such a location is a fairly expensive thing to do. You've got to fly all the men and materials in. You have a winter road that, if you're lucky, runs maybe 90 days—about 60 days this year—to haul most of the heavy equipment and materials to the site. It's a very expensive place to build a mine, and I would say it probably adds about 30% to 40% of the cost of building a mine up in Attawapiskat versus building it around Sudbury or Timmins.

That's the reason we had the diamond royalty, along with all other mining royalties, set at 5% north of Highway 11. We said, "If you build a mine in a remote area, we're going to offset some of your costs by lowering the mining royalty from 10% to 5%." What you're effectively doing now is moving from 5% to 13%. You're not even giving diamonds the same treatment they would get if they were a mine operating in an unremote area; you're allowing them to pay more.

This brings me to the point that I can go up and start a gold mine next to the Victor Project—this is the really unfair part about this. Placer Dome could find gold two feet away from the Attawapiskat property and decide to build a gold mine there. Once they bring that project into production, they're going to pay a 5% royalty on what is extracted from the ground.

The aggregate pits in the province of Ontario—we don't say, "Because you're in Peterborough and this pit is down in Lindsay, you're going to pay a different royalty to the province when it comes to aggregate." We have one price. Why do you all of a sudden have this policy that we have a royalty that's special for diamonds versus all other kinds of mining? At the end of the day, they make the same amount of money. Just because it's diamonds doesn't mean that they make more money; it's based on the economics: X amount of dollars to build the mine, amortize the cost of building the mine versus what comes out of the ground, and that comes up to whether you profit or not. Whether it's gold or diamonds makes very little difference; it's a question of how much return you can get for your investment. Basing it on diamonds or gold makes no difference as far as how you mine or what you do or what your costs are; they're basically the same.

The first thing is that it's really unfair from the perspective of, why should you say we have a different mining royalty tax regime for diamonds versus gold? It should be the same for all. If the province wants to increase royalties, that's one thing. If you said, "We're moving from 5% to 6% or 7% on remote mines and 10% to 11% or 12% on non-remote mines," we could have the discussion. There may be a logical reason for doing that. But you don't treat one differently than the other.

Let me put it this way: The member from Mississauga West talked about the automotive industry. How would

you feel if we had a policy in the province of Ontario that said, "General Motors gets charged this rate and Ford pays a different one"? Nobody in this province would ever stand for that. You would never say, "Taxation rates should be different based on if you're Ford or GM." We have one taxation rate for the auto industry, and the taxes they pay are based on their output and their profitability. They basically pay the same rate. They may pay more or less tax, based on their profitability, but the rates are the same. So why do we have different rates in mining and allow that to happen when we don't have different rates of tax when it comes to the automotive industry, the manufacturing industry, the petrochemical industry or any other? This is clearly a question where the government is saying, "We can go in and scoop some more money because they're diamonds and we're going to take advantage of the big, bad, old diamond industry," which I think is very wrong.

This brings me to one of the points that the minister keeps on getting up about: The Minister of Finance has been getting up, day after day, answering the questions in the House and trying to paint De Beers as a bad corporate employer or a bad company, and somehow or other, they're the big, bad old De Beers and why the hell are we all siding with them? I find that, quite frankly, reprehensible on the part of the government. De Beers is like any other corporation in Ontario that does business. They follow the rules of Ontario, and they do what they have to do based on what our laws are here. They're a good corporate employer in northern Ontario, and for you, all of a sudden, to turn around and try to demean them, I think is very much beneath the Minister of Finance, the Premier and this government. The issue is that this particular tax, at the end of the day, is going to be harmful.

I want to get to the last part of this, and that is the First Nations component, which is one of the parts that this government is very much not understanding. The community of Attawapiskat was asked some six to seven years ago to negotiate with De Beers an impact benefit agreement. Everybody in government is asking the First Nations to come to the table to talk about development. There is somehow this perception out in Ontario that First Nations don't want development. First of all, I want to say that's not true. First Nations want development, but they want to have development in which they have some say about how it's going to move forward and in which they're going to have an ability to share in the revenue.

If you open up any plant anywhere in Ontario, there's an automatic right for municipalities to get taxation from that plant so that you can get benefits to build up infrastructure in your community: better schools, better roads, better water plants etc. If you're a First Nations community, there's no such mechanism, so De Beers and Attawapiskat had to negotiate an IBA on their own. And I want to say this: De Beers didn't have to do it. De Beers understood from a corporate perspective that if they wanted to develop this project, they had to negotiate with the Attawapiskat First Nations band. Over a period of six



or seven years—it started, first of all, with Chief Ignace Gull; it continued through the process with Theresa Hall; and it was concluded under Mike Carpenter, the current chief of Attawapiskat. There was a negotiating team that was put in place by the Attawapiskat band, led by Thomas Tookate, and they negotiated, along with a number of people at De Beers, to come to an understanding in their impact benefit agreement.

The first point that I want to make is this: What message is this government sending to First Nations if you change the rules at the end of the game? You're saying to all First Nations out there that are interested in doing development, "Go out and negotiate a deal, but by the way, when your deal is done, we're going to come in and scoop money out of your deal, and we're going to fill our pockets at Queen's Park at the expense of the First Nations, of the corporations and of the workers who work at those projects."

That's a really bad message to be sending. We should be trying to encourage First Nations to get involved in development, and to do that, we should do some automatic things around land use planning and also around the issue of revenue sharing, but because we don't have that, we're forced to negotiate impact benefit agreements. So here you've got a situation where the Attawapiskat band, in good faith, sat down with De Beers, and there were some very tough and intense negotiations. De Beers—I'll give them some credit—have been pretty progressive about how to deal with this. They've really tried to fulfill and meet the needs of the First Nations community to the extent they could. At no time did the province ever do anything to help mitigate those costs in any way. And here we are; we finally got an agreement.

Chief Mike Carpenter, Thomas Tookate and others stood in front of the community—I think it was two years ago—and asked the community to vote on the final IBA. Over 80% of the community voted yes. Imagine how you feel today if you live in Attawapiskat and the game has been changed because this government is coming in, by way of increased royalties, and scooping money from the profitability of De Beers, which will impact the IBA, because part of your IBA is dependent on how much money and profit De Beers makes.

So I say to you that you've basically done two things. You've taken money away from Attawapiskat and other communities like Kashechewan, Fort Albany, Moosonee and Moose Factory, and have taken money directly from those communities that stood to benefit. I say to you: Shame for that. You're sending a negative message when it comes to First Nations negotiating with companies like De Beers when it comes to development. This is the first time in a long time we've seen the economic activity that we saw on the James Bay coast. If you go into the town of Moosonee today, there is all kinds of activity.

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Go talk to the mayor of Moosonee. Go talk to the chamber of commerce. Go talk to the citizens of Moosonee. There's more activity in Moosonee today because of the activities of De Beers. It's the jumping-off point,

once you get to James Bay, to clear equipment to get up to the site. It is the first time we're seeing a bit of an economic boom on James Bay in communities like Moosonee. Imagine what it means to communities like Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Attawapiskat, Moose Factory and Marten Falls. There's an opportunity for employment. For the first time ever, there's a large opportunity to employ people in real jobs that pay big dollars. You can make darn good money working as a journeyman, as a miner or whatever it might be at the De Beers site, either on construction or when the mine goes into operation, and part of the IBA includes training.

Here we have the opportunity to give First Nations people the opportunity for employment, and what you're doing by way of this particular diamond tax royalty is that you're telling De Beers and everyone else in the diamond industry, "Don't come and invest in Ontario for more diamond exploration." Because this pit will close. There's about a 10- to 12-year life cycle on the pit they're currently going to be mining up at the Victor project. Part of the success we need up in James Bay is for more diamond exploration to happen. If you spend money on exploration, we will find other Kimberley pipes. That's where you find these diamonds. Then, in the end we would be in a position to utilize the infrastructure of the De Beers mining camp to mine other pits. But De Beers has already said it. They were downstairs in the Legislature when the president of De Beers came before the Minister of Natural Resources, the Minister of Northern Development and Mines and all other members who were assembled during mining week and said, "Look in the back; there's a display. That is the first diamond mine to be opened in the province of Ontario and, by Lord, it's going to be the last under this regime."

They're the guys, the Canadian division of De Beers, who had to convince De Beers international to spend over \$1 billion to build this project. They had a lot of explaining to do after the De Beers diamond tax was put in this particular budget. It's going to be very questionable if that company and others are going to spend the money they need to spend on exploration to continue looking for diamonds in Ontario. You've basically put a sign outside of Ontario that says, "Don't invest here."

You have a chance this morning, by way of this motion, to vote with the Conservatives and with the New Democrats to support this motion in opposition of the budget measure in Bill 187. I urge members to do it. For the first time, you've got something good going on up on the James Bay coast. Aboriginal people will get employment. We're asking you not to turn your backs on them.

The other thing I find very bizarre in this debate is, where are the Liberal northern members? Of anybody, they should be the ones explaining it here. I have no disrespect towards the other members speaking, but I would love to hear a northern member from the Liberal the caucus speak on this.

**Mr. John Milloy (Kitchener Centre):** It's a pleasure to stand here today and speak on the resolution brought forward by my colleague Mr. Hardeman.



In essence, the way I read the resolution, it really can be looked at two ways: first, obviously, the specific items around Bill 187 and the royalty regime on diamond mines.

I think it's important to put on the record a few things. First of all, the proposed changes in Bill 187, actually in the guise of a substitute—I had a chance to sit on the committee for an afternoon when this particular item was being discussed and had a good opportunity as a member to learn a lot about the ins and outs. The proposed changes in this legislation would see the same royalty regime in Ontario that exists in other parts of the country, such as in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. In other words, we're talking about a level playing field. We're talking about the same tax regime that exists throughout the country.

We're also proposing that the government exclude diamonds from Ontario's mining tax. As the Minister of Finance has said in the House a number of times, over the next few months we'll be working with the mining industry to finalize regulations. The Minister of Finance said that certainly a lot of the sensitivities that have been raised today, that have been raised in question period, are going to be taken into account as the regulations go forward. That deals with that part of the resolution, the very specific part on Bill 187.

But when you look at the larger thrust, what it's really saying is that in order to create jobs in this province, we need to cut taxes. For me, as a great observer of politics over the last four years and a front-line participant, it was a bit of back to the future, the Mike Harris mantra that it's all about cutting taxes. By that, I don't mean that it's not important to have a competitive tax regime. I think everyone in the province recognizes the need to have taxes as low as is reasonable, but the big difference between this side of the House and that side is the definition of "reasonable."

What we saw across the way when Mr. Harris came in was tax cuts that were not reasonable. We saw tax cuts that added to the provincial debt. We saw tax cuts that were paid for by cuts to health care, cuts to education and cuts to the Ministry of the Environment. We saw tax cuts that were covered up by the sale of Highway 407, a last-minute fire sale so that they could go to the people of the province and say they had balanced the budget.

Finally, we saw a \$5.6-billion deficit which was hidden from the people of Ontario in the last election campaign. I heard Mr. Eves on television say over and over again that the budget was balanced, and we came and found out that it wasn't. It's that sort of approach that shows the difference between what's reasonable and what's not.

On our side, we have nothing against lower taxes. In fact, we've been moving in a number of ways to make it more competitive. We've speeded up the elimination of the capital tax by 2010. We've reduced the business education tax rates. I must say that the morning after the budget I had a chance to address a breakfast at the chamber of commerce, which was well attended. It was

one of the number one things that the business community applauded our government for in the last budget: the fact that we were dealing with business education tax rates. We've extended the apprenticeship training tax credit—again, very much welcome in the business community. These are reasonable steps by our government to lower the tax rate to make Ontario more competitive but at the same time to make key investments, and those key investments have been in areas like research and innovation and also in areas like education. This comes full circle, I guess, to the thrust of Mr. Hardeman's resolution today, which is about maintaining jobs in Ontario, attracting jobs to Ontario and creating jobs in Ontario.

It's very interesting; on Monday morning I had a chance to go to Conestoga College, which serves my community, one of the best community colleges in the province. I had a chance to make an announcement of some additional funding from this government in order to improve their infrastructure and also improve the quality of education and the number of students who go there. All the speeches that were made, both by community representatives and representatives of the college, pointed out how institutions like Conestoga College are so key to ensuring prosperity in this province by providing the sort of skilled workforce which is going to allow our companies to be competitive. It's investments like that, as well as the sorts of tax cuts we're talking about—it's that balance which is going to serve to ensure prosperity in Ontario.

The sad part about it all was that since we came to power, we've seen funding to Conestoga College increase by 33%, and under the previous government you saw funding decrease over the eight years they were in power. Instead of talking about how we're going to build on a platform going forward, unfortunately last Monday we were playing a bit of catch-up. But over the last four years you've seen that catch-up take place. You're starting to see the building blocks in place to ensure that we've laid a real foundation for Ontario's prosperity going forward. That's why the thrust of Mr. Hardeman's resolution, both in a specific way and in a general way, is something I can't support.

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** I'm pleased to rise this morning to speak on the private member's resolution brought forward by my colleague from Oxford that says, "That, in the opinion of this House, the government must do more to protect Ontario jobs and as a first step should repeal the section of Bill 187, An Act respecting budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters, 2007, that imposes a 13% tax on diamond mines."

I fully support this resolution. We speak in the House all the time about the job losses that Ontario has incurred. The manufacturing sector alone had over 137,000 job losses; 13,000 last month alone. I spoke this month about the loss of my manufacturing plant at Fleetwood, in Lindsay, and the possible loss of more companies in the Lindsay and Victoria-Haliburton area because of the loss of that one plant, and how this government has sat there



and let this happen. By imposing this improper mining tax without notice on De Beers, that is trying to stimulate jobs in the northern community—the case the member from Timmins—James Bay spoke so passionately about—what message are you not getting over there? You speak, but we certainly don't believe it and we don't see it on the ground, of the good things you're doing for Ontario and the economy. Why are the job losses occurring, then?

1050

You slam the previous government. We were the leader in North America in job creation. So your comments are so unfounded and so ridiculous. I mean, you haven't seen a tax increase that you didn't like, that you didn't embrace: "How can we make more tax increases?"

The member from Kitchener Centre speaks that he was at the chamber of commerce. Well, you should listen a little bit more intensely about how they feel about the climate in Ontario and how we're driving jobs out of Ontario and what changes they'd like to see, because it's not the same message that the McGuinty Liberals are grabbing. You're consistent, I have to say, on breaking promises. I have to say you're consistent on breaking promises.

What about the single largest health tax? You said, "I won't raise your taxes." The single largest tax grab in the history of the province was under Dalton McGuinty, only weeks after he'd done the advertisement and signed the paper that he wouldn't increase your taxes. They increased spending by \$22 billion in less than four years. Just today we hear the high-class view of himself, that he deserves over a million dollars in flights, flying over all those areas that have lost their jobs. It's just incredible, the arrogance that this government shows, and the disrespect for taxpayers' money.

We've brought forward ideas in this House. It was supported by all parties, about a job strategy for Ontario, because the facts are out there, the loss of jobs in Ontario. We all need to work together to create more jobs, to create an environment for jobs. So when the government slips in this little increased tax for the diamond mine that's going to help job creation in rural, remote areas that so desperately need jobs? I don't think so. What were you thinking over there? How could you do it to the First Nations, the aboriginals who are working with De Beers, trying to pull themselves up, trying to get jobs, trying to make better places in their communities, cleaner water, better housing, better education?

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Scott:** You're taking that away from them in this tax and you've been disrespectful to the people of Ontario—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Peterborough, you're out of your seat.

**Ms. Scott:** —with the amount of job losses that have gone on. It just blows me away that you people can ignore job creation opportunities. We've brought forward a job strategy plan. You supported it. An eastern Ontario secretariat—we've lost tons and tons of manufacturing jobs. An eastern Ontario economic development fund,

even, similar to the northern development fund: You've ignored that. You're ignoring eastern Ontario and now you are slamming northern Ontario with this diamond tax, this hidden tax, singling out De Beers like they're not a good company, and they've been working with aboriginals and First Nations. Do you think you're helping them? This is an incredibly arrogant move on the part of the government and I want the people of Ontario to know the message for the Dalton McGuinty government: Stop driving jobs out of Ontario.

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie—Lincoln):** I'm pleased to join in support of my colleague from Oxford, who brings forward a very sensible and important and timely resolution to the House today. You know, I was proud to have been the mines minister when the Mike Harris government brought in a forward-looking and powerful plan to re-energize mineral exploration and production in the province of Ontario. We cut the mining tax rate to among the lowest in Canada. We brought in a special bonus for remote mines to encourage projects just like the Victor mine, in partnership with First Nations. We invested in exploration technology. As a result, we saw new mines opening up in the province of Ontario. We saw rejuvenation of exploration activity, and now, when you go back to places, whether they be Timmins, Sudbury or just outside of Attawapiskat, we're seeing activity in the mineral sector.

Now Dalton McGuinty decides to take us back to the bad old days by arbitrarily hiking the tax on the Victor mine in the most sneaky, underhanded way: no consultation, no indication to the industry, and Dalton McGuinty himself there at the groundbreaking ceremony a year or a year and a half ago boasting about the remote mine tax, saying, "Come on in; we've got this lower tax rate. Make your investments in the province of Ontario." That's what he said when he was there at the site. When he came back to Toronto, Dalton McGuinty betrayed investors, betrayed those working there, betrayed municipalities like Timmins and Moosonee, and betrayed First Nations that had benefit impact agreements, that had put their trust in the province to keep its word. Dalton McGuinty betrayed them by again breaking a promise, and this was one bald-faced broken promise. He actually was there at the site, construction cap on his head, shovel in hand, boasting about the lower tax rate. He sneaks back here to the capital and raises taxes on this project after hundreds of millions of dollars in investment were already made.

Look at some of these investments: \$150 million to help get services to the mine; \$9.9 million in pre-employment training for coastal communities; an almost \$1-million training centre built by De Beers in Attawapiskat; \$50 million to \$70 million for winter roads to provide access. The lower mining taxes and the remote mining tax were paying dividends for the province of Ontario. Dalton McGuinty can't help himself: He broke a promise and jacked up the tax rates—a double whammy on projects like this. It will send a chilling signal to the international community on further mineral investment in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario.



Members may not know this, but Chile was the second-ranked jurisdiction for mineral investment, according to a Fraser Institute survey. Chile did something similarly sneaky and underhanded, Dalton-McGuinty-esque, and their rating plummeted to 14th in the world when they brought in a surprise royalty. Under the Mike Harris government, we took Ontario from down the list to the number one jurisdiction for mineral investment, first in Canada, then in North America, then in the entire world, and projects like this came forward as a result. Dalton McGuinty is taking us backwards.

I've got to think—and I know my colleague from Perth–Middlesex is a sensible fellow. I know he listens to the arguments here in the Legislature, and he would know what a bunch of hooley Dalton McGuinty's argument is, that we have to have our tax rate the same as every other jurisdiction in Canada. My goodness. We have a mine in Northwest Territories; we've got the Victor mine. The other provinces don't have diamond mines. I can't use the proper word for it, Mr. Speaker, but that is far off the target of the truth when he describes the situation as having the same tax regime as the rest of Canada. What a bunch of nonsense.

Secondly, why it's in Ontario's interest to find the highest tax rate available and take us to that level is beyond me. It's beyond me. Where is the logic in saying, "There's some other mine out there that has a higher tax rate. Therefore, we're going to increase our taxes"? I don't know if he's worried about people smuggling diamonds from one territory to another, reburying them and then unearthing them, but you'd think, if anything, it would work in Ontario's favour if that were the case, because our taxes would be lower. What a bunch of nonsense and hooley from the finance minister and this Premier in trying to describe what is nothing but a naked tax grab, Dalton McGuinty robbing First Nations and individuals who are going to work there of their livelihood, and Greg Sorbara driving the getaway car. There's no doubt that if we want to have mineral investment in remote areas to bring prosperity and economic development to First Nations communities and northern municipalities, you need to have an attractive business environment.

Hugo Chávez himself, in Venezuela, would not even have done this. At least Chávez would have gone in the front door and nationalized the company. At least Chávez would have done that. Dalton McGuinty sneaks in the back door with nobody looking, and behind closed doors jacks up the tax rates. And it's not just Ontario, my friends, that is concerned about this; the international investment community is going to look at Ontario sideways, and there's no doubt that future Victor mines are in jeopardy, because you just can't trust a word that the Premier says. If he was there himself and made this promise and then broke that promise several months later, what does that say about future investment in the area? I know my colleagues, all intelligent individuals, will see the nonsense in the Premier's description of how he could possibly justify this.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** I'm very glad to enter into the debate about—what is it? The parliamentary term, I guess, is "hooley," I believe the member from Erie–Lincoln wants to talk about. I'll tell you what's hooley about this. It's that the Progressive Conservative Party and the NDP are in cahoots. I believe I've heard their platform, that they're going to go to the people of Ontario and say, "We are going to repeal Bill 187, the section regarding diamonds. We don't think the royalty rate in Ontario should be the same as the Northwest Territories; we believe that it should be substantially lower. We don't think that those taxes should be applied to, say, for example, a new hospital in Woodstock or a new nursing home in Tavistock. No, no, we shouldn't do that. Instead, what we should do is we should have it at 5%." They fail to recognize the reality on the ground.

I was just reading in Osprey Media, the Northern News—do you know what was announced just yesterday? Because I heard the opposition say, "Oh, this has just put a chill on diamond exploration across the great province of Ontario." Well, I read in Osprey, the Northern News in the Kirkland Lake area, just yesterday, that "Stornoway Diamond Corp. will spend \$1 million on exploration of its Timiskaming diamond project, located in Ontario and Quebec. In total the company has committed \$23 million in 2007...."

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I say to my friend the member from Oxford, if the good people listening to this debate have been paying attention, they would have said that there was a chill, that there was no exploration going on whatsoever, that the measure by the minister has somehow created a chill. But I see companies right now announcing, quite proudly, that they're going to be doing even more exploration right here in the province of Ontario. So that's interesting. But you know, I can understand that, because it is from a party that ran and hid a \$5.5-billion deficit. I can understand that they have trouble with this.

They say, for example, that we're losing jobs, because they don't understand the very simple accounting principle of net; in other words, the economy will always have in areas jobs that are shed and other areas where jobs will be gained. While we've been in power, the net number is well in excess of 300,000. Yes, there's always going to be some dislocation, but if you listen to the nabobs of negativity over there, you'd think the province was going to hell in a handbasket. But in reality, what's happening is that there are more people working today than there were before. And do you know how we do that? We actually have a balanced budget, something that both Mr. Eves and Ms. Ecker were incapable of while they were trying to run this place, because they were running around hiding a deficit: "Peekaboo. We don't have a deficit in this province."

I look forward to the platforms of both the NDP and the Conservatives, where they're going to explain to people how they can cut this diamond royalty, because I'm pretty sure I heard a promise there that that's going to be in their platforms. So we'll all be eager to see



whether or not Mr. Tory is going to eschew any type of revenue from diamonds and reduce that down—and for diamonds that are owned by whom? It's a natural resource. They're owned by all the people of Ontario. Are we all going to be able to do that? Are we all going to be able to participate, or is there going to be a special rate?

I find it really difficult that the opposition is going to say, on the one hand, "We believe that we can spend more money," and on the other hand, they think Ontario should have a rate of royalty on diamonds that is some 40% of what it is in the Northwest Territories. I know that the James Bay area is rural and remote, but so is the Northwest Territories.

I think it's very important for us to stand in our place and decide whether we're supporting Bill 187. I know I voted for it; I know the opposition voted against it. So I'm assuming that's going to be in their platform.

We said that the royalty can be up to 13%. There's a sliding scale. I know there are regulations that are being developed. I can understand why some of the industry would portray doom and gloom, but I particularly understand why my partisan friends opposite are trying to make an issue out of this. But we'll see when they release their platform exactly where they stand on this, because our position is very clear.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Mr. Hardeman, you have up to two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Hardeman:** I want to thank all the members who spoke both for and against the resolution. I'm sure that those who spoke against it, having heard the others, will seriously reconsider their position and vote for this resolution because of the positive impact it will have on mining and mining exploration.

The members opposite pointed out that they have one article that says someone is still doing some exploration. We have nothing but articles on this side from every paper in northern Ontario that say they are opposed to what the government is doing on this issue.

I just want to point out too that the members of the government side, though they kept talking about how they weren't going to support this resolution and how they didn't think it was the right thing to do, came up with absolutely no good reason why this tax needed to be increased, other than they found somewhere else that has a higher tax. They said, "My gosh, if the government in the Northwest Territories can get away with getting that much tax, I guess we want it too," and so up it goes.

I think it's also very important to point out—and the member from Timmins-James Bay was very eloquent in his presentation—the difference between a diamond mine and a gold mine that are side by side, and the fact that this change increases the diamond mine from 5% to 13%, a 150% increase, where the gold mine right next door still has the same rate. I'm sure that when the McGuinty government finds out that that's the case, they will start looking for where we can find a place in the world where taxes on gold mines are higher, and they will be implementing an increased tax on gold mines.

Lastly, I think what's most important about this resolution this morning is not the level of taxation, but it's the Premier and being able to believe anything he says. He goes to the ribbon-cutting and says, "I think the reason this company is investing in our economy is because of the low tax rate we have on diamond mines." Then he rushes back and says, "Greg, they've got the shovel in the ground. They can't get away now. Raise it up. This is a great place to grab a whole bunch of money because they can't do anything about it." When the rest of the world sees that that's how this government does business, they will not be investing in our communities and we will not be getting the jobs we require.

## GO TRANSIT

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South-Weston):** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should, on a priority basis:

Increase access to public GO Transit service to all communities served by the Georgetown south rail corridor;

Revive the previous GO Transit expansion environmental assessment requiring only one additional track to expand GO service on the Georgetown south rail corridor; and

Separate all GO Transit aspects of the current Georgetown south rail corridor environmental assessment from all aspects of the private, high-speed, air-rail link Blue22 environmental assessment.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Pursuant to standing order 96, Mr. Ferreira, you have up to 10 minutes. The floors is yours.

**Mr. Ferreira:** I rise this morning to speak on a matter of significant importance, not just to my constituents in York South-Weston but to tens of thousands of Ontarians living in northwest Toronto and elsewhere along the Georgetown south rail corridor.

As members here and regular viewers at home will know, I have devoted considerable time in this House talking about the need for better public transit in my part of Toronto. Communities in my riding, and in places like northern Etobicoke and north Peel and Halton regions, are presently underserved by public transit.

I am certain that government members here this morning will point to the proposed subway extension to York University. That is a worthy project, but the geographic location of that line does not improve the public transit capacity in my riding, nor in the northwest quadrant of Toronto and beyond.

My riding is, however, served by GO Transit trains along the Georgetown south rail corridor, which covers communities along the line from Georgetown to Union Station in downtown Toronto and includes a stop in the village of Weston in my riding.

For many years now, communities along this line have been underserved and the present capacity is strained. Currently, GO Transit service along the Georgetown south corridor consists of 10 trains inbound toward



Union Station and nine trains outbound towards Georgetown each weekday. Most of these trains are during rush hour. There is no weekend service along the line.

I have taken GO Transit on this line many, many times. Back when I lived in Brampton and worked out of the CBC building on Front Street, I would take the train twice each day. That was 10 years ago, and the rush hour trains even then were packed with commuters standing for the duration of a long ride. Commuter congestion has only increased during the intervening years.

The recognition of an urgent need for increased service on this line isn't a new one. Back in the early 1990s, the NDP government of the day initiated an environmental assessment to look at improvements to GO service along the Georgetown corridor. That EA was completed in 1994 and it forecast a strong increase in demand for GO service along the line due to general population and employment growth.

The EA called for the addition of four new stations, including one in my riding to be built near Eglinton Avenue West in the community of Mount Dennis, which was to be called York City Centre. The EA also called for the construction of an additional track along the corridor to serve the increased number of GO trains and reduce the sharing of existing track infrastructure with freight trains.

The EA involved extensive public consultations with affected residents and its recommendations received glowing public review. One resident who participated in the process back then said, "A great idea, 20 years late though ... this expansion will greatly help people who need jobs." Another said, "This is a most welcome improvement to rapid transit in the northwest metro corridor. The integration with Eglinton West RT is superb planning. Let's keep moving toward implementation!"

1110

These residents, as it turned out, were well ahead of their time. Here now, 13 years later, the vast majority of the recommendations of that EA have not been acted upon. We had, unfortunately, in the province of Ontario a government from 1995 to 2003 that did not place public transit on its list of priorities, and thus the GO expansion plans were derailed.

We do have, today, a new EA regarding the Georgetown south rail corridor. However, this EA appears to be stalled by the present government. The EA is not only examining expanded GO service along the corridor, it is also looking at the possibility of a publicly subsidized, privately operated, high-speed train, the now very well-known Blue22, which would run between Union Station and Pearson airport.

This Blue22 would not stop in any of the communities in my riding or anywhere else along the line, save for, perhaps, a stop at the Bloor and Dundas subway station here in the city of Toronto. It would run along the line every seven and a half minutes, 20 hours a day, 365 days of the year. To hop aboard, it would set you back the princely sum of approximately \$20, give or take a buck

or two. The Blue22 fleet would consist of several 50-year-old refurbished diesel cars—not exactly modern-age technology.

Blue22 would not be public transit. It would be a private service, operated by a very well-heeled private consortium led by the Liberal-friendly folks at SNC-Lavalin. Yet it would cost taxpayers upwards of \$1 billion to provide the necessary track upgrades along the line. Residents and business owners in my riding have been quite clear in their opposition to Blue22, which would pollute our neighbourhoods, lead to greatly diminished property values—real estate brokers have estimated up to a 40% drop in values—while offering very little in the way of spinoff benefits to the local community. To add insult to injury, the initial concept for Blue22 would force the closure of three main streets in the village of Weston, cutting off the residential district from an already struggling business strip along Weston Road.

The opposition to this flawed idea is so fierce that more than 3,000 people showed up at one public meeting. The community has continued its stiff opposition to Blue22. They have been unfairly dubbed, in some quarters, as NIMBYites. That is the furthest thing from the truth. The people of Weston, Mount Dennis and other communities along the line welcome improved transportation in our part of the city, but it must be improved public transportation that serves the needs of local residents and business owners. One of the reasons they elected me on February 8 was so that I could deliver their message. That's what I'm doing here this morning and what I have done repeatedly in this House since I first arrived here.

Just yesterday, I asked yet another question of the Minister of the Environment on this very issue. She is responsible, as we know, for the current environmental assessment process. Her ministry has been stalling on its decision regarding the terms of reference that would provide the framework for the current EA. We were initially told that the decision on the TOR would come down in late January. Of course, there was the small matter of the by-election in York South-Weston in early February. The fate of Blue22 was the local key issue. We learned through an e-mail during the campaign that the ministry would release its decision on the TOR the day after the vote. When that news made the front page of the local community newspaper, the Ministry of the Environment started to backpedal. The furious backpedalling has continued for the past three months, and it would appear by the non-answers that I get here in this House that not even the minister knows when that decision will be made.

The unfortunate part of all of this is that for every day that the minister and this government stall, the longer the commuters along the Georgetown corridor must wait for improved service. The too few trains get more congested by the day, the gridlock caused by those who can't squeeze on to the trains increases by the day, pollution gets worse and Toronto gets its first smog day of the season in early May. That's the reality.



Yesterday, in response to my question, the minister urged me to “take a significant and relevant stand” on public transit. I hope the minister is at least tuning in right now. Perhaps she has missed it, but that is what I have been doing since my very first day here and it is what I am proud to be doing on behalf of my constituents here this morning.

With this resolution, I am asking this government to take a significant and relevant stand on improved public transit in a part of Toronto and the GTA that desperately needs it. I am asking this government to unbundle the GO Transit expansion plans from the deeply flawed Blue22 EA. I am asking this government to dust off the perfectly good EA that was completed more than a decade ago and fully implement its recommendations so we can move ahead with delivering real and meaningful investment in public transit.

If this government is serious about its commitment to public transit, it will support my resolution this morning. I am afraid, however, that their commitment is rather thin—postcard and photo op thin. If that’s not the case, then I challenge government members, the ones in this House this morning, to rise from their seats and vote in favour of my resolution, which would immediately provide the impetus for much-needed, long overdue expansion of public transit along the Georgetown south corridor. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** I am pleased to have the opportunity to join in the debate today on the proposal by the member for York South-Weston relating to: “Increase access to public GO Transit service to all communities served by the Georgetown south rail corridor,” including my own community of Brampton.

GO transit is one of Canada’s first—and Ontario’s only—interregional public transit systems, established to link Toronto with the surrounding areas of the greater Toronto area. I understand it carries 44 million passengers a year on an extensive network of trains and buses that is one of North America’s premier transportation systems. We’ve been truly blessed with one of North America’s finest transportation networks and strongest transit systems.

But in recent years, I think we’ve all noticed an increase in population that changes those travel demands for Malton, Brampton and Georgetown, and it can no longer be accommodated on the existing transportation system. We all know first-hand how congested the existing roads and freeways are for both automobile travel and bus transit. GO transit can no longer accommodate the current demand on the existing infrastructure. Projected commuter ridership from Brampton to Toronto is increasing exponentially, from today’s 15,000 daily trips to over 27,000 daily trips by 2015. It’s no wonder that many of my constituents in Brampton Centre feel that our current transportation system has failed them and hasn’t kept pace with the demands of the community and others that extend beyond my community in the Georgetown south corridor.

The present service provided in Brampton appears to me to be at or near capacity, with standing room only on very many trips. This capacity cannot be increased without significant rail infrastructure improvements in the corridor. My own experience is that in the first year at this Legislature I tried to take the GO train, not realizing how late some of the trips were. At the end of the day, we finish here so late that there is no train service. Even if you finished at 6, you’d sometimes have a hard time getting to the last train going to Brampton, which is at 6:45, so then you’re stuck with the bus. Sometimes the bus doesn’t make it all the way down to downtown Brampton, and I have to go to the Bramalea station and catch another bus to downtown Brampton to get a car home. It doesn’t fit the lifestyle I have, and my guess is that there are a lot of businesses and business owners that have to travel to Toronto that can’t meet that schedule either. It certainly doesn’t fit the needs of the kind of commuter we have now.

The present service clearly needs assistance, and that’s why the expansion of GO service in the Georgetown corridor is critical to meet the current and future demands of my community and others that share that same corridor.

Our government is serious about public transit and we do recognize the importance of investing adequate capital funding in safe, reliable, efficient transit systems, which is the key to building a strong and prosperous community around Brampton and across Ontario. We as a government have invested \$1.3 billion since coming to office in 2003. That sounds pretty serious to me. We’ve invested in GO Transit, as well as developing partnerships with both the federal and municipal governments to work with GO Transit to ensure that the expansion program, which includes the proposed project along the Georgetown corridor, is completed by 2010. The completion of these projects is essential to better accommodate the 44-million-plus current riders across this province, and these riders are expected to double in the next 20 to 30 years. Long-term funding is essential to improve public transportation that will reduce the gridlock that we all know about, improve our environment and preserve the quality of life for the residents of Brampton—the people I represent—and for everybody in this House and the communities they represent across the province.

**1120**

The proposed project along the Georgetown corridor would see improvements in rail infrastructure along GO’s Georgetown line, which would see additional tracks being added between Bramalea and the recently built Mount Pleasant GO station, which I had the pleasure to be at and never thought I would see happen in my lifetime, but this government made it happen. Improvements like a new layover facility near the new Mount Pleasant station and several road-rail bridges in the Georgetown corridor increased track capacity for both the proposed air-rail link Blue22 service and future GO Transit rail service.

The additional services and improved systems would reduce travel time, increase reliability, safety and access-



ibility for commuters and would have a positive long-term impact on the residents of my community by reducing their stress levels during travel—which I think we all experience—and ensuring that people arrive home in a timely fashion so they have more time with their friends and families.

This proposal to increase access to public GO Transit service to all communities served by the Georgetown south rail corridor has the full support of not only myself and our government but the city of Brampton and the region of Peel. City council and staff have been diligent in their advocacy on this issue and have been following the GO Transit environmental assessment study with great interest, as it would enhance service in Brampton. Brampton city council has endorsed the environmental assessment and preliminary design study for the Georgetown north rail corridor to plan for the expansion of the Georgetown commuter rail service to provide for eventual two-way, all-day GO train service through the city of Brampton.

The regional chair, however, has expressed serious concerns regarding the delays and potential future delays to the Georgetown south corridor service expansion project. The region is committed to ensuring that Peel's long-term needs for frequent, all-day, two-way commuter rail service and transit access to the Lester B. Pearson airport are not jeopardized and that regional staff will continue to work with the GO Transit project team on the environmental assessment study to help support and expedite the project.

The environmental assessment study has two components, as I understand it. One examines proposed improvements along GO's Georgetown south rail corridor that would meet the increasing demand and future needs for the GO train service to communities such as Brampton along the corridor running between Halton and Peel regions and the city of Toronto. The second is to examine alternatives—both within and outside the Georgetown south rail corridor—for an airport transportation link, including the proposed air-rail link service between Union Station and Lester B. Pearson International Airport.

The potential for excessive delays in introducing additional commuter rail services due to the linking of the environmental assessment for the Georgetown GO rail service expansion project with the airport transportation link project is an ongoing concern. Considerable public opposition to various aspects of the airport transportation link project has already resulted in the termination of the original class environmental assessment and a bump up to the individual environmental assessment. My concern is that the current proposed approach of combining the environmental assessment processes for the two projects into one could lead to further delays. Under this approach, problems with the airport transportation link project or part of the project could delay or even jeopardize GO Georgetown service expansion, which would have a negative effect on my constituents and our local economy.

Although GO Transit is obligated to conduct the environmental assessment work required for the GO rail

improvements to the Georgetown corridor and for the air-rail link, we should remain committed to an open and transparent process that considers the communities' concerns.

It is my understanding that no single alternative has been selected at this point and that any decisions regarding the structure of the environmental assessment would have to go through the Ministry of the Environment.

By investing in the GO Transit expansion program and by expanding service along the Georgetown south rail corridor, we will enable a larger portion of commuters in Brampton to use public transit instead of private automobiles. That's why I support Mr. Ferreira's motion to prioritize access to public GO Transit service to all communities served by the Georgetown south rail corridor.

In order to avoid any future delays to the GO expansion project along the Georgetown rail line, we need to move quickly to accommodate the current and projected future ridership. This expansion is important and is key to building a strong and prosperous Peel and, in particular, the riding of Brampton Centre.

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington):** I'm pleased to stand to support the member from York South-Weston. As a proud previous member of the GO Transit board, I had some awareness of this project while I sat on the board. I want to say that there was a lot of discussion. The good people of York South-Weston did come to the GO board to make a presentation and the points are valid and well taken.

GO Transit is probably one of the safest and cheapest commuter rail systems in North America, and we as a province ought to be very proud of it. As we're talking about the Georgetown rail corridor, I want to be sure—at the remote possibility that there are any folks here from Georgetown or who may be listening to this broadcast later in the day—that this does not mean there's going to be increased train service to Georgetown. This increase of train service, should it go forward, would be to Brampton only. I just wanted to get that out of the way.

I too feel it's important to separate the two projects, because I don't believe the air-rail link project has met its time. I think that is a project for the future, given the challenges and the priorities that exist for projects and for funding here in the greater Toronto area for GO Transit and other modes of public transit. I'm a huge supporter of public transit, but it has to be convenient, it has to be safe and it has to be the kind of cost our residents can afford.

Whose interests are being met by the air-rail link? The public has concerns. Are their interests being met? There has to be some certainty for our government that the province's interests are being met. Also, there has to be some certainty to the private sector, which is going to be involved here, that the game will not change halfway in the middle of the game.

I feel that this project has jumped the queue in a priority list. I feel there are priorities in our province, in our GO system, that stand far higher than this air-rail link. I think it would behoove the government to do an



audit of exactly how many cars would be taken off the road if the air-rail link project went forward. In fact, it would behoove the government to do an audit on any grant in public transit to any municipality to make sure the money is being spent to take cars off the road. With the millions and billions of dollars we have spent for public transit, we have no idea whether or not we are in fact taking cars off the road, so I think it would be a really good idea for us to monitor how the money is spent and whether we get our money's worth.

We know that gridlock is a cost to our economy of about \$2 billion a year, and that is substantial.

I feel that this air-rail link began under the previous federal government when the Minister of Transport at that time wanted to leave a legacy as he left his office. I think this air-rail link is that legacy, but it's not well thought out. The numbers have not been crunched. We cannot be confident that the system will support taking cars off the road. I live in Burlington. Would I pack my suitcase, kids in tow, get on a GO train, go to Union Station and get on yet another train to go to the airport? I don't think so. So who is this rail link serving? How much are we going to get? What kind of bang are we going to get for our buck?

1130

I think that this project is out of touch and that we have been pulled into a flawed federal scheme that began with the previous government. This is one of those ad hoc projects that really jumped the queue in a list of some very serious priorities that would have made a difference in the greater Toronto area, and even the wider greater Toronto area, because we're now looking at points beyond what is known to be the greater Toronto boundary. We're looking beyond into Sudbury, Peterborough, Niagara, and even Waterloo and Guelph to see how we can service people and take people off the roads, because that's what the goal should be. This project, I don't think, does that.

Inasmuch as the EA is part of this battle, I think another very important battle is to say, why the air-rail link now? Why are we doing this now? What benefit is it to us for the cost that's going to be involved and for the disruption that it's going to cause to residents in the area? It's going to split communities—communities that have existed there for years, scores of years. So I think that if we go ahead and spend this money, it goes under the category of government waste, and it will be yet another one-off project to satisfy somebody. There'll be a great ribbon-cutting and a name on a plaque, and away we go.

In finishing my comments, I want to say that I support what the member from York South–Weston has brought forward and I'm all for public transit. I think it's very important for us to deliver on projects that get people out of their cars and into public transit. The air-rail link is not one of those projects.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** I just want to speak for a short while to support the member from York South–Weston by way of his resolution and by way of his defence of his community in York South–Weston. GO Transit is proposing to lay down two new

tracks, in addition to the existing three tracks, to allow a train to connect Pearson airport and Union Station. Blue22 is the name they give the train, which I suspect means the price that they charge—

**Mr. Ferreira:** Twenty-two minutes.

**Mr. Marchese:** I thought it was the charge that they pay. It's the 22 minutes it takes to get from downtown to the airport.

**Mr. Ferreira:** The trains are blue.

**Mr. Marchese:** And the trains are blue.

While it seems like a good idea on paper, nobody has talked about the impact it has on the good people in Weston region. Residents have worked around the inconvenience of the railway tracks for a long time and they did this with grace and, yes, complaining, but they lived with it for a long, long time. There was never enough money, it seems, to make bridges over or underpasses under the tracks. It seems that we didn't have enough Rosedale residents in the area to give it adequate muscle to urge the politicians of the time to build the bridges or the underpasses under the tracks. I suspect that if we had a couple of Rosedale types, with all due respect, we would get their voices heard and politicians would listen.

Unfortunately, the community from the area has never been so lucky, until we got people like my friend Paul Ferreira from York South–Weston, who has put up a strong defence, with the thousands and thousands of people that have gone to these meetings, urging not just an environmental review process—a thorough one—but urging them to stop something that has very little convenience to the community. What we have in the community is a lack of recreation centres; as some other writer mentioned, limited child care facilities; very few places for seniors to hang out. We know they won't even stop at Weston. They won't even get a benefit from this train, because it won't stop there. They, these poor residents, are being gouged at the pumps, with gasoline prices going up and up. They have poor transit service, as far as I understand very little public transit service, and very poor at that, so at the end of the day you say to yourself, what do the good people of York South–Weston get out of this? They don't get very much. What we know is that many roads are going to be closed. Thanks very much for getting this train to start at Union Station and cut right through the York South–Weston region and go straight to the airport. It will benefit some people; it will certainly benefit SNC-Lavalin, who is a publicly subsidized, privately owned company. They're going to make a few bucks, no doubt. But we haven't talked very much about what is to be had, what is to be gained for the working people of York South–Weston. From the looks of it, and the debate that I have witnessed over the last couple of years, we get nothing.

This resolution is an attempt to speak to the problems and to the need for public transit in York South–Weston, and to the need for federal politicians and provincial politicians to review how we help a community that is in desperate need of public transit, rather than a train that is going to cut through their region and cause greater problems to them with very few benefits.



**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** It was a very interesting motion. Some of my comments have been made by some of the other members. But there are three words in it that I am grappling with. They are “a priority basis.” The member for Brampton Centre, an excellent member who very diligently represents her constituents in Peel region and shares some of the same problems that I do, has made some of these points. Let me emphasize them from my vantage point living in Mississauga.

The people I serve live on the Milton GO line. The Milton GO line has five trains in the morning, five trains in the evening, and they are all full to capacity, every single one of them. Very much like the member for York South–Weston, we are also served by GO bus service. The bus service, admittedly, is very good. But if we really need to get people out of their cars, and people are willing to get out of their cars, we have to be able to get them from where they are to where they want to be and back at the times they want to get back. Many people will say, “I don’t mind getting out of my car, but I don’t want to get out of my car to get into a bus to sit in the same traffic that I would sit in if I drove my car.”

It’s for that reason that in the government’s 2006-07 budget we set out a long-term plan for developing public infrastructure, and especially public transit. There were a number of services that received a significant amount of funding—one of them in my own city of Mississauga, the Mississauga Transitway; the Brampton AcceleRide—but we also set up the framework in the Greater Toronto Transit Authority to begin to address such issues as the member for York South–Weston raises.

I ask the member rhetorically, should his project, its merits and its drawbacks notwithstanding, be the basis for GO Transit to say, “Drop what you’re doing, forget your capital plan, look after me first”? I’m not sure that’s quite the case. If indeed there needs to be an additional track, should it be on this line or should it be on the line that serves Milton? Should it be on a line for Milton and Oakville? Should it be on the line that’s serving the areas where more people are moving to, where more of those cars are getting on the road—not because people want to get their cars on the road but because there’s no other way to get downtown?

1140

Very much like the member for Brampton Centre, I love to take the GO train. Whenever I can, whenever this House rises at 6, I’ll take the GO train in the morning and skip that wretched traffic. Sometimes I can make the 6:10 GO train back to either Meadowvale or Streetsville, but very often I’ll have to take the Lakeshore express to Clarkson and get my significant other to pick me up from Clarkson because there is no train back along the Milton line.

But this member says that his solution in York South–Weston should be the priority and not the area where 15,000 to 20,000 people a year are moving to in western Mississauga. That could be a problem. That may be what we should be debating. Is this indeed the priority or is it simply one of the priorities? Isn’t it something that perhaps GO Transit in its capital plan should be consider-

ing? Wouldn’t it be better if, within the framework of the GTA, GO Transit took a look at the entire region’s needs and looked at it in the form of its capital plan and said, “These are the priorities. These are the timelines”? But the member says, “Look after the Georgetown south rail corridor and do it right now.”

I have a little note here on what GO does supply in the York South–Weston area: four trains into Toronto in the morning; four trains back toward Georgetown in the afternoon. Between Bramalea GO and Toronto there are the 10 trains, four as previously mentioned, plus an additional three during rush hour, plus an additional three in the off-peak hours. On the Milton line we get nothing off peak—nothing. We have five in the morning and five in the afternoon, and by the time you get to the third stop, which is Streetsville, you can hardly find a seat anymore. It used to be that you could get as far as Erindale and still get a seat, but it’s harder and harder now to find a seat if you get on the train at Erindale.

But the member says, on a priority basis, “Me first.” There are indeed others of us, and I think the best solution would be not to say, “Me first before anybody else,” but to say, “Let us all co-operate,” because this is private members’ time and we are not here to put on our party colours. We are here to ask, “What is the best thing for the province of Ontario?”

While the member relates some needs which, from what I have heard this morning, seem to be perfectly legitimate needs, my suggestion to him would be, would it not be better to sit down and look at the entire area served by GO Transit and decide, if we are going to build an additional track, where that track should be built first? Undoubtedly, we need a lot more capital expansion, but this one is perhaps a little bit too narrow, saying, “Look after York South–Weston.” Why not look after Peel, Halton and Durham regions and consider that in the same plan that we are in looking after York South–Weston? Other than that, it seems to be a fine resolution.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** The previous speaker seems to be suggesting that we need an overall commission to look at this, maybe an authority, and I could come up with a name. I think maybe we should call it the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority. Oh, maybe one was announced by the Liberal government. Maybe we already have one. I think we have a chairman, the former mayor of Burlington. However, I don’t believe it’s doing anything. I don’t think they have a budget and I don’t think they have any employees.

It’s a sort of authority because it doesn’t really have any authority and it doesn’t have any budget. It does have a chairman, but the chairman is not all that busy. I would agree with the member from Mississauga West that that’s kind of what we need and we kind of have one, but it’s not going anywhere. Nothing is happening with it.

But this proposed resolution from the member for York South–Weston is indeed a good one, especially as it deals with increased capacity on the Georgetown south GO rail corridor. Although that increased capacity doesn’t go to Georgetown yet, it certainly has the potential of going to Georgetown at some time in the future.



Increased public transit, of course, is one of the solutions to the gridlock that is costing business, commuters and family life. Stress and health care and everything else in the greater Toronto area are costing them a great deal in dollars and in the well-being of individuals within the public. It's costing us in every way.

Of course, public transit is one of the solutions to that gridlock. It's one of the solutions that has to be looked at very carefully, and in this particular project, looking at it very carefully has taken an inordinate amount of time. That is one of the problems we have. When these projects come along, everybody says, "Yes, yes, we need them. They're a good thing," and as the member for Burlington pointed out, when you take the cost analysis of it—how much does it cost to pry someone out of their car?—this project, obviously, the GO Transit project, would be a good one that I think would come out well in that cost comparison. Whereas the so-called Blue line link—Blue line, I think it's a mine actually. Somebody's going to mine some money out of it, but I don't think it's going to take very many cars off the road. It's perhaps not as much a line as it is a mine, and with the number of studies that have gone on with this particular project, that mine is kicking out lots of returns for people doing those studies. I don't think it's going to provide a very realistic alternative.

A high-speed rail line would be a wonderful thing for the GTA, but I would suggest that the heaviest commuter traffic we have in the GTA is along the 401. If you're going to have a high-speed, high-capacity public transit line, certainly the 401 corridor would be the highest priority for me. As you're sitting in your car on the 401, watching a high-speed train, or rail, or some public conveyance going by at high speed, I think it would certainly encourage you very quickly to reconsider your options and perhaps leave your car at home, or at least leave your car in a very large parking lot somewhere and get on the high-speed train that would take you to your destination.

Having all of those facilities coordinated, of course, is another wonderful thought. It would require an overall authority to coordinate those things, and if the GTTA—Greater Toronto Transportation Authority—were ever to be given a mandate and a budget and a staff to do those kinds of things, I think it could probably do a very good job of it. But as it sits in its infancy, it doesn't seem to be moving ahead very quickly or with very much enthusiasm from this particular government.

Talking of public transit as a solution to gridlock—yes, that is a solution to gridlock, or one aspect of that solution. I know that Ontarians have a long-term love affair with their cars, and it's always popular from a political point of view to talk about building more roads. I think anyone who has studied the problems of gridlock would agree that it would be absolutely impossible to build enough roads to handle the kinds of traffic generated in high-density populated areas such as the New York to Washington corridor, the Los Angeles area, Chicago area, or indeed, the Toronto area. I think those four areas are the four highest-density areas in North

America. So the GTA problem of gridlock is one that is mirrored in the other three huge metropolitan areas in North America.

I think one of the alternatives to gridlock and public transit is also the ability to decentralize this province. Ontario is a very large province. The fact that we have focused our growth in the GTA area is one that has brought about continuing, growing problems in the ability to move people from one side of the city to the other, to move freight in and out of the city. We've seen most of the industrial base of Toronto move out of Toronto because they can't get their supplies into their factory in just-in-time delivery, and they can't get their product shipped out of the city with anywhere near efficient time use. So you've seen most of that manufacturing base move out into the suburbs or into the nearby towns, in order to accomplish that just-in-time delivery or the meaningful or reasonable communications with the road links and rail links that exist in those areas.

So probably a decentralization of the province in general, moving it into the London-Chatham-Windsor corridor, into the Peterborough-Belleville-Cornwall-Kingston corridor, moving it north into Barrie and north of Barrie, into those areas to encourage growth in those areas, to decentralize the Toronto area, the GTA, would be a longer-term solution to what is going to continue to be a growing problem until it is faced square on.

As with most of the issues that face us today, there is no single issue, there is no single solution, but there are multiple solutions. I would suggest that doing what we can with roads and encouraging the efficient production of growth and building of public transit and the decentralization of the GTA would be the solutions to those problems.

1150

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto-Danforth):** It's my pleasure to speak in support of the resolution put forward by my colleague Mr. Ferreira.

It's interesting to look at this whole issue from two angles. One is what I will refer to as fun with environmental assessments. The other is the whole question of transportation and the need for transit—adequately funded, properly planned, put-in-place-on-time transit.

First, in terms of fun with environmental assessments, this environmental assessment that Mr. Ferreira's motion refers to is one that seems to keep getting put off. It was certainly my understanding at the end of last year that this environmental assessment would be announced in February. Then the by-election came down and that date for the environmental assessment was pushed off. We have a provincial election coming on. It may well be that it's pushed off again. Clearly, this is a hot issue.

But it isn't just this issue where environmental assessments have been pushed off. The integrated power supply plan—the Minister of the Environment exempted one of the largest decisions Ontario is ever going to make in its history from a full environmental assessment, so that the decisions that will have to be made in as intelligent and rational and environmentally friendly a way as possible will be deprived of the forum that in fact the



decision should take place in. I see that decision around the power supply plan being solely politically driven, and the same in this case; I see another politically driven decision.

In my riding, on the Portlands Energy Centre, which was proposed starting at the end of 2003, we in our community asked for an environmental assessment. We were told that, no, it was impossible; the time was too short. But lo and behold, in the initial RFP process, the Portlands Energy Centre failed to make the cut and then it was another nine months to a year before a decision was made to go ahead—nine months to a year, when in fact an environmental assessment could have been held and frankly, in my opinion, a decision could have been rejected that will be seen to be a problem for the long term for this city.

So those are two significant areas where environmental assessments have been pushed aside when they were needed, and yet again we have another. There is an environmental assessment. It was done, completed in 1994. The facts at hand, the arguments that were made, are all on the record. What remains, given the transit crunch that we have in this city, in this region, is to proceed with the environmental assessment and not have us knocked off kilter, not have us knocked off track, as it were, by this Blue22 proposal, which frankly is, on the face of it, very questionable. If it's going to have an assessment, by all means convene an assessment and get rolling on it. But we have an assessment on the GO trains already in place; we have a need already there. We need to move forward.

I was in estimates over the last few days. As part of the estimates, we were looking at the transportation needs in the greater Toronto area. The Neptis Foundation, in 2002, did a study of transit needs in the GTA, a study of transportation issues in the GTA, in the period 2000 to 2031. On a business-as-usual basis, assuming that the way we've continued to approach things over the last decade will continue on into the future, they show a very dramatic increase in greenhouse gas emissions in this region over the next 25 years. As we all know, we're looking at dramatically increased travel times—another way of putting that is dramatically slower travel times—for people in this region.

We need the GO Transit to go ahead. Blue22 is not going to address those key issues. Ms. Savoline addressed that, the fact that we're looking at a spread-out demand for access to the airport. If we have a route to the airport and a rail route, and a rail route makes sense to me, let's have an environmental assessment. Let's look at multiple options. Let's look at one that has the best impact in terms of benefit for the environment and benefit for the population as a whole. Let's not hold this community in suspense forever, saying to them, "Well, after the next election we'll get around to the environmental assessment. No, after the next election we'll get around to the environmental assessment." It doesn't make sense.

I understand that there is an interest on the part of the proponent to have their assessment bundled in with GO

train assessment. Obviously, you get to surf on, to ride on, the shoulders of a project that already has approvals, support, and analysis that shows that it's useful and makes sense. So why not try to ride on those coattails?

Let's adopt the resolution that's been put forward by my colleague. Let's make sure that those GO trains get built, get put in place. We've already heard people speak this morning about the need for the existing transit. Let's put them in place and let's go forward.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate? The member for York South–Weston.

**Mr. Ferreira:** Mr. Speaker, I will use the remainder of our time and then wrap up with my two-minute summation.

I want to use the next few minutes to respond to some of the very thoughtful comments that were made by members from across the greater Toronto area. We heard from the members from Brampton Centre, Burlington, Trinity–Spadina, Mississauga West, Halton and Toronto–Danforth. I think it's quite evident that we all believe there must be greater investment in public transit across the region of greater Toronto. In fact, there is tremendous economic benefit to be gained by investing in public transit. We know the negative effect that gridlock has on our economic development, on the economic standing of our region, and we know the positive impact that investment in real public transit can have.

The member from Brampton Centre acknowledged in her very thoughtful comments the tremendous growth—I believe her word was “exponential”—that she has seen in the need for and the use of GO Transit services in her community of Brampton, a community that I grew up in. As she well knows, by having the Blue22 proposal bundled in with the GO Transit expansion plans on the Georgetown line, what we've seen is unnecessary delay.

The public has been in an uproar over the possibility of private trains—publicly subsidized to the tune of almost \$1 billion—running through their community without stopping in that community, without leaving any tangible benefit behind in that community except for diesel fumes. And that's not acceptable to the people of my community. That's why they have been so concerned about this issue and why they have come out in such large numbers. It's also why we are seeing this unnecessary delay in expanding service along that line.

This leads me to my response to the member from Mississauga West. His concern was with the words “on a priority basis,” and perhaps feeling that I was suggesting that the Georgetown line be bumped ahead of all of the other projects. In fact, expansion plans are under way across the entire GO network, and in some places that expansion is near completion. The unfortunate reality is that along the Georgetown line, because of the bundling with the Blue22, that line and the commuters on that line are being penalized. They're being forced to wait, and we are all ready. Just on the acceptance of the terms of reference, the TOR document, that has already caused a delay of several months. That document was submitted to the Minister of the Environment late last year, in late November. A response was expected back within six weeks. I



outlined the timeline earlier. We were expecting a response in late January; it did not come. We were told a response would come in early February; it did not come then. We are now in the middle of May and we still have no indication whatsoever on when this government is prepared to act on the terms of reference for the environmental assessment, which is why I say, "Let's take that 1994 assessment, let's pull it off the bookshelf, let's blow the dust off and let's utilize that environmental assessment."

1200

It calls for the added infrastructure of one track along the line. That is all we require to be able to deliver expanded GO train service, not just for the people of York South-Weston in the station in Weston but also to Bramalea, Malton, Etobicoke North, Brampton and further into Halton, into Georgetown, into the riding of the member from Halton. That's why this is so important and it's why I think I am about to receive the support of members from all parties on this initiative.

I want to say, before my initial time runs out here, that I know the good work the member from Burlington, who sat on the GO board, did and other GO board members did in raising concerns about how the Blue22 plans would unfairly impact—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** I have to hear the member speak and I'd like your co-operation in doing that.

**Mr. Ferreira:** I want to thank the member from Burlington for her presentation and her fine work when she served as a member of the GO board in expressing her concerns about Blue22 and its impact on expanded GO service.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Are you—

**Mr. Ferreira:** I thought you were going to pause, Mr. Speaker.

I want to close by thanking the people of York South-Weston who have, over the past two and a half years, engaged themselves on this issue. As we know, the various levels of government were trying to sweep this project under the rug. It was initially announced as a federal government initiative in 2000 by then-federal Transport Minister Collette.

Our community was kept in the dark for almost five years, but when activists in the community raised this issue and brought it forward to the community, the community rallied like I have never seen it rally before. We had meetings where thousands of local residents came and expressed their opinion, and they applied a little bit of political pressure. That's why we now have a full-fledged environmental assessment process.

It's also why we have a government now that is trying to avoid dealing with this issue. They've had a number of months to deal with it. All indications are that they may decide this is too hot a political potato to deal with anytime soon, and that means perhaps after October 10. They may not have the chance to deal with it after October 10, and the unfortunate result is that the people

who need the Georgetown GO service to be expanded will be forced to wait and wait and wait.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

## MINING TAX

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** We shall first deal with ballot item number 8, standing in the name of Mr. Hardeman.

Mr. Hardeman has moved private member's notice of motion number 64. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will call in the members after dealing with the next item.

## GO TRANSIT

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** We shall now deal with ballot item number 9, standing in the name of Mr. Ferreira.

Mr. Ferreira has moved private member's notice of motion number 61. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. It's carried.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1205 to 1210.*

## MINING TAX

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Hardeman has moved private member's notice of motion number 64. All those in favour, please stand.

### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Savoline, Joyce
Bisson, Gilles	Hudak, Tim	Scott, Laurie
Chudleigh, Ted	Marchese, Rosario	Tabuns, Peter
DiNovo, Cheri	Martel, Shelley	Tascona, Joseph N.
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norm	Wilson, Jim
Ferreira, Paul	Munro, Julia	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hampton, Howard	Prue, Michael	Yakabuski, John

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed, please stand.

### Nays

Balkissoon, Bas	Jeffrey, Linda	Phillips, Gerry
Bradley, James J.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Racco, Mario G.
Chan, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Rinaldi, Lou
Delaney, Bob	Levac, Dave	Ruprecht, Tony
Dombrowsky, Leona	Marsales, Judy	Sergio, Mario
Duguid, Brad	Milloy, John	Smitherman, George
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Mitchell, Carol	Van Bommel, Maria
Gerretsen, John	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wilkinson, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 21; the nays are 24.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

All matters relating to private members' public business having been dealt with, I do now leave the chair. The House will resume at 1:30 of the clock.

*The House recessed from 1212 to 1330.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Members' statements.

*Failure of sound system.*

**The Speaker:** The microphones are down. We will recess for 10 minutes.

*The House recessed from 1333 to 1344.*

**The Speaker:** I thank members for their patience. We will start again. The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

## PREMIER'S SPENDING

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** We learned today through a freedom of information request that Premier McGuinty has used government aircraft flights costing \$1 million since taking office, while only claiming \$2,913 in air travel. Air McGuinty funnels all these other flights through the MNR, thereby avoiding the need to account for their cost. It is no wonder the Minister of Natural Resources has ordered conservation officers to stay in their offices and out of the field. He is spending a good part of his budget keeping his boss above the clouds and beyond the reach of public accounts.

The records further show that many of these flights, at exorbitant cost to the taxpayer, were for nothing more than partisan photo ops to spread the Liberal message. What the people haven't been told in the latest story of Liberal disregard for taxpayers' money is that when the Premier flies high, his entire entourage of security people also travel by ground. That's right. His fleet of SUVs, with the full complement of security officers, drive to meet him at the airport, take him to his photo op, drive him back to the airport and then return to Queen's Park. Of course, he will also have the remaining SUVs in the fleet take him to the airport in Toronto and pick him up when he returns.

I feel that it is high time—no pun intended—that the true cost of the Premier's travel be made public, just as it is for other members of the Legislature. This would be in keeping with the practice in other provinces. The people have a right to know just how much it costs them for a Dalton McGuinty photo op.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Under standing order section VI, "Rules of Debate": "In debate, a member shall be called to order by the Speaker if he or she ... (h) makes allegations against another member." I was listening very carefully, twice

now, to the member's comments, and a couple of the comments—not all of them, but a couple of them—made an allegation of impropriety regarding party politics versus his business. I would think that allegation is not acceptable.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** To that point of order, Speaker: With all due respect to you and to the government whip, this effort to merely censor members doesn't constitute a point of order. In fact, this whole business of rising on phony points of order should be sanctioned by the Speaker to protect us from the technique, the tactic of this being used during speech-making, for instance, during debate, to cut into opposition members' legitimate time slots, be they the one-hour time slots or the 20-minute time slots. These are phony points of order. They shouldn't be tolerated.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** On the same point of order? The member for Brant.

**Mr. Levac:** While I appreciate the member for Niagara Centre's comments on that, I will make it perfectly clear that I did wait until the member was finished. I also was going to wait until after the entire section so I could bring this up.

But to say this is a phony point of order—it's not, because I am making reference to a specific comment made in the member's statement. The specific comment the member made was allegations of party politics versus his business time. His reference was an allegation that would be subject to Integrity Commissioner response. So I would say this is a very serious allegation and I would say this is a serious point of order to be made.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** Further on that point of order, Mr. Speaker, you know I'm not normally one to get up on points of order, but on that one I've got to make the following point: There have been a number of times now, two or three that I can recall in the last week or so, where the government whip has gotten up on similar points of order, trying to limit the ability of opposition members to do their jobs and point out issues that are maybe sometimes seen negatively by the public.

We know that the tenet of Parliament works this way: The government has the right to introduce legislation and, in the end, as a majority government, has the right to pass legislation by right of their majority. But this speaks to the right of the opposition. The opposition in the British Parliamentary system has a very important role, and that is to keep an eye on the government and to make sure that the government is looked at through the scrutiny of the opposition, through the standing orders.

I would point out that when we bring school groups into this chamber to see what we do here, we always point out, if you take a look up at the other end, that you have the owl on the opposition side of the benches to keep an eye on the government. For the whip to say that this member was doing something beyond what's allowed in the standing orders is, quite frankly, shameful and regrettable, and I hope he withdraws.

**The Speaker:** I appreciate the comments on the point of order raised by the chief government whip and the



members for Niagara Centre and Timmins–James Bay. In listening carefully to the remarks made by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, I did not detect the fact that he may have gone across the line. I will have a look in Hansard later to see if that's true, but on the face of it, I did not believe that to be true.

1350

Secondly, to points of order: Points of order are always in order and can easily be done in a period where we have 90 seconds for each member to make their statement. No one lost any time. No one was interrupted. It seems to me that that's fair to members on all sides. But I would caution members that we need to not only respect the words in the standing orders and our precedents and practices, but to respect the intent of those very same traditions that we have. So on all sides, I ask for your co-operation as we move forward to the next statement.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** On that point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to thank you for your intervention and your ruling. I appreciate that.

#### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I'm pleased to rise in the House today to speak to the nearly \$1-million investment made by the McGuinty government for a women's shelter in Peterborough. The YWCA of Peterborough, Victoria and Haliburton will use these funds to build, renovate, maintain and repair a shelter facility that supports women and their children fleeing domestic violence.

I would like to take a moment to share some of the comments made by Lynn Zimmer, the executive director of the Peterborough, Victoria and Haliburton YWCA. Ms. Zimmer writes:

"This grant has restored our belief in miracles." That's right, Mr. Speaker, "miracles." "Although we've been moving resolutely toward the goal of a new shelter, it has at times seemed like an overwhelming task beset by barriers."

"This marvellous grant suddenly makes everything seem possible. We can imagine success. And the news has already inspired community members to come forward with donations and offers of help."

The McGuinty government firmly believes that the victims of domestic violence deserve all the support we can give them, and that is why this investment is so important to the community of Peterborough.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I was just wondering if that announcement was done by way of the Premier with King Air from Sault Ste. Marie, and if that could be shown through the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** That's not a point of order.

#### PREMIER'S SPENDING

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** Today's revelation that Dalton McGuinty is once again

misusing taxpayers' dollars should not come as a surprise to anyone. The Liberal re-election team would like to portray Mr. McGuinty as average Joe Citizen, but his lifestyle since becoming Premier belies that. How many average Joes can spend \$1 million of someone else's money flying around the province for photo ops or to avoid gridlock on GTA highways? How many average Joes live in a tony Toronto neighbourhood in a taxpayer-subsidized mansion? How many average Joes require 10 OPP vehicles for security purposes, at taxpayers' expense? How many average Joes pay \$75 for a haircut?

Once upon a time, Dalton McGuinty may have been an average Joe, but his elevation to the Premier's office brought with it taxpayer-paid temptations that he has been unable to resist. This is a presidential Premier, another Liberal who believes he is entitled to his entitlements. Come October 10, the real average Joes, many of whom have lost their good jobs under Dalton's watch, will say "Enough abuse of our money" and show him the door.

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** Community mobilization against the possible third Toronto hydro line has triggered a series of interesting reactions on the part of the Minister of Energy and his staff in a bid to downplay this potential spinoff consequence of the Liberals' approach to electricity planning. In the wake of the first community meeting on the issue, ministry staff said that Pape Avenue was no longer a possible site for a transmission corridor. But, upon further questioning, they would not rule out the possibility of a potential route coming through other east end locations.

The Minister of Energy, in his latest effort to downplay the potential corridor, has mused about conservation and efficiency as a possible means to address Toronto's electricity security rather than another transmission line. This is an approach that the mayor, a number of city councillors, local residents and sustainable-energy experts have long pressed for, but it's missing in the government's electricity plan directives what shape that Toronto's electricity-use patterns are going to be. Different analyses on the government's electricity strategy released last year conclude that it underutilizes demand response, conservation and efficiency. However, mounting community pressure around the third Toronto line could produce the needed shifts toward investing in programs that reduce our electricity use.

#### DESTINATION IMAGINATION

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge):** It's my pleasure to share with you today some of the impressive achievements of young people in my riding of Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge. A number of students from William Dunbar, Frenchman's Bay and Westcreek public schools in Pickering have demonstrated outstanding creativity and initiative as participants in the Destination

ImagiNation program. They're with us today in the east gallery.

Destination ImagiNation is a community-based, school-friendly organization that encourages children to develop their creativity, teamwork and problem-solving skills. Teams work together to solve technical, artistic and scientific challenges and then present their solutions as skits.

As an extracurricular activity, it requires many hours of preparation and hard work, and I commend these students for their dedication and enthusiasm. I also wanted to praise the parents and teachers who have supported these children throughout each of the challenges. On March 31, these schools competed at the Ontario Creativity Festival and Tournament and won both the elementary and middle levels. They will now compete at the global finals in Tennessee, from May 23 to 27, among 8,000 other young people from over 13 different countries.

I'm proud of our students. I want to wish them the best of luck at the global finals and hope you will welcome them to the chamber.

#### PREMIER'S SPENDING

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie—Lincoln):** It's a special day because Premier McGuinty has finally followed through on a promise. After four years of promises to reduce gridlock, Dalton McGuinty has come up with a solution to avoid the stop-and-go on the Queen Elizabeth Way, the 401 and the 403. Dalton McGuinty has redefined the term "puddle jumping." In fact, Air McGuinty will be flying from Toronto to Hamilton, Toronto to Niagara and Toronto to Peterborough on a regular basis, the catch being that you have to be the Premier himself or one of his staff to get a ride on one of these taxpayer-funded flights.

While Premier McGuinty is sitting comfortably in his private plane, flying over families who are waving their pink slips, we've seen some 140,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs flee the province of Ontario. Local job losses in Hamilton and Niagara include the Port Weller Dry Docks—250 jobs gone; Blue Bird Corp. in Brantford—130 jobs gone; Slater Steel in Hamilton—360 jobs gone, and maybe he can see all those pink slips from 5,000 feet.

The other interesting thing: I think we finally found out how close Dalton McGuinty has actually been to Caledonia. When he's flying into Mount Hope, he's pretty close. He's just 5,000 feet above the ground and the occupation in Caledonia. This is a Premier with the largest entourage in the history of the province of Ontario. He's gone so Hollywood that he makes Paris Hilton look grounded.

#### WORLD HYPERTENSION DAY

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** I rise today to tell the House about World Hypertension Day. Hypertension is commonly referred to as high blood pressure.

Persistent hypertension is one of the risk factors for strokes, heart attacks, heart failure and arterial aneurysms. Ontarians can help reduce hypertension by maintaining a healthy weight, eating healthy foods, minimizing their alcohol intake and leading active lives.

I would like to comment on the work of McGuinty's government and the first-ever Minister of Health Promotion, Jim Watson. He has worked so hard to ensure Ontarians are getting the message that they can play a huge role in getting their wait times down and staying out of the hospital by leading healthy, active lives.

I'd also like to extend a sincere thank you to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario and their outstanding CEO, Rocco Rossi. This organization is delivering a stroke and hypertension advertising campaign that works. The total stroke visits per month to the regional stroke centres increased by 23%, from an average of 353 per month preceding the campaign in 2003 to 433 per month in 2005. The number of individuals arriving at stroke centres within the critical two and a half hours of stroke onset increased 54%, from an average of 100 per month before the campaign started to an average of 154 per month during the second campaign.

1400

#### NATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph—Wellington):** I rise in the House today to recognize the National Day Against Homophobia. This day once again highlights the need to end homophobia in the workplace and in our schools. Helen Keller once said, "The highest result of education is tolerance," and where better to teach tolerance than in our school systems?

Many strides have been made in the past several years towards accepting gays, lesbians and transgendered people as equals in our community, but we still have work to do. Our safe schools action team found that bullying among students is frequently associated with homophobia. We must make clear that any negative targeting towards lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered students, in particular where it includes physical, verbal, social or cyber bullying, is simply unacceptable.

Last month, our government introduced legislation aimed at amending the Education Act. The proposed legislation would make all forms of bullying an infraction that could lead to suspension. Intervention in the bullying behaviour would be mandatory. We all need to take individual responsibility and speak out against homophobic behaviour when and where we see it: in the workplace, in the classroom or on the playground. I look forward to the day when a National Day Against Homophobia is no longer required.

#### ENDANGERED SPECIES LEGISLATION

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth—Middlesex):** I have always asked the question in this House: Who is driving



the bus over at the Progressive Conservative caucus? I take a look in Canadian Oxford, and they say, under the definition of “leader,” “A person followed by others.”

Well, let’s talk about leadership. We have in the progressive convertible caucus their environmental leader, their critic for the environment, the member for Haliburton–Victoria–Brock, and what did she do last night in regard to the Endangered Species Act, the gold plate standard here in North America? She votes against it and leads three other members to vote against her leader. Then we have the leader in waiting, the member for Erie–Lincoln. He knows enough that he should vote for that bill because one day his ambition may take him someplace else. So he knows enough. But then, of course, we have the leader in absentia. Where is the leader of the official opposition, who tells the press, within minutes, that he is going to—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock.

The member for Parry Sound–Muskoka.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe the member was making reference to a person’s attendance here in this place, and that is not in order.

**The Speaker:** Well, of course it is never in order to speak about a member’s presence or absence from this place.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. The member will refrain from making any statements about a member being absent.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. I wouldn’t want to do that, because I, like everybody else in the press and across Ontario, can actually read the Hansard of a vote that happened to be held in this place just last night, and in that Hansard it tells us which members care enough about an issue to show up and which ones do not. It also tells us very clearly that on this side of the House we voted for the Endangered Species Act, unlike perhaps some others, and I give full credit to the wannabe leader of the environment, the leader-to-be and the leader in absentia.

## LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Today is an important day as we say goodbye and thank you to our group of pages who have served us so well over the past weeks.

## VISITORS

**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: We were happy to welcome Canadian Martyrs School to Queen’s Park this afternoon. Unfortunately, they just had to leave a minute ago but I wanted to recognize their attendance with their teacher, Mrs. Rema Passarelli—a terrific group of students.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I don’t often get a chance to welcome people to Queen’s Park from my riding, because it’s so far away. But I do have with me here today two individuals—one from Kapuskasing, Al Simard, president of STRONG, along with J.C. Nolet from the town of Smooth Rock Falls. I welcome them to the chamber.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: It’s my privilege today to invite to the House three people—Jean Perkins; Ruth Marchese, who I think may be related to our friend here from Trinity–Spadina; and John Orrett—who are all here to watch the Legislature perform so smoothly and flawlessly this afternoon.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I hope your guess is correct.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to welcome Rob and Sherry Wightman of Welland. Now, they’re not here, but they’d like to be here.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### GAS PRICES NOTICE ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007

#### SUR LES PRÉAVIS D’AUGMENTATION DU PRIX DE L’ESSENCE

Mr. Tascona moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 228, An Act to require advance notice of gasoline price increases / Projet de loi 228, Loi exigeant que soit donné un préavis en cas d’augmentation du prix de l’essence.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford):** The bill enacts the Gas Prices Notice Act, which requires retailers to provide advance notice of 72 hours to the public of any increase in the price at which gasoline will be sold and also requires reasons for the increase, and there are penalties for not providing that notice.

### HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (MUFFLER NOISE), 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (BRUIT DE SILENCIEUX)

Mr. Ruprecht moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 229, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to muffler noise / Projet de loi 229, Loi modifiant le Code de la route en ce qui a trait au bruit émanant de silencieux.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** This bill amends the Highway Traffic Act to prohibit the operation of a motor vehicle or motor-assisted bicycle that is not equipped with an operational muffler in good working order that prevents excessive or unusual noise and smoke. Installation and modification of mufflers to increase sound output is also prohibited, as is the operation of a motor vehicle or motor-assisted bicycle that produces noise above the allowed level. All Ontarians have the right to a good night's sleep without being woken up by the excessive noise of modified mufflers.

1410

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### PREMIER'S SPENDING

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier, and it concerns the information that has come into the public domain today about the use of government aircraft. Information obtained by the Hamilton Spectator indicates that flights for the Premier alone aboard private government aircraft cost taxpayers more than \$1 million since he took office. There are all kinds of potential concerns about this: disrespect for taxpayers' money, lack of example as thousands of people lose their jobs, environmental concerns and so on. But let's start with another one: lack of transparency.

This issue has been debated here before over the years. In the case of this particular set of facts coming out, the Premier's own filings show an expense of only \$2,913 for the use of these planes versus the actual cost, reported in the press, apparently of \$1 million. Does the Premier think it's fair for taxpayers to have the published record in the public accounts show an expenditure of \$2,913 when the real number, which is much harder to get at, is \$1 million?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I think the real issue here is this: The people of Ontario work very hard, and they expect me to do the same on their behalf. That requires that from time to time I remove myself from the precinct. It requires that I leave the city of Toronto. This is a big province. It requires that I travel to other places. For example, just today, I delivered a speech at 8 o'clock this morning. That was followed by meetings here at Queen's Park. I delivered a speech at noon, and that was followed by meetings, followed by question period. That will be followed by more meetings, and I will deliver a speech later tonight. Fortunately, all of that work today is done within the GTA and I can manage it by car. But from time to time, I'm required to use an airplane. I think the people of Ontario would expect that in order for me to accomplish their business, I will do whatever is necessary to that end.

**Mr. Tory:** Again, with respect, my question to the Premier wasn't about the legitimacy of any particular flight—there are occasions when it is quite legitimate to use planes—my question was about transparency, where we have to find out from a newspaper article who used what planes when. I will quote what the Spectator starts its story with today: "It takes about 90 minutes at the speed limit to drive from Queen's Park to Niagara Falls. But on August 8, 2006, that was too long for Premier Dalton McGuinty. So he ordered up a \$2,000-an-hour government plane, had it flown empty from Sault Ste. Marie to the Toronto Island airport, then hopped a 10-minute ride to the ... St. Catharines/Niagara airport in Virgil."

This gives a new meaning to the expression "puddle jumper." If the Wright brothers were looking for someone to adopt, the Premier would be a shoe-in.

When you meet tourism operators in Niagara, people at our own casino indicate there is a problem with customers coming down there to do tourism activities and go to the casino because of gridlock on the Queen Elizabeth Way. Doesn't the Premier think we might have a better example of leading by example if this information was made public so people could judge for themselves exactly what you just talked about? We could all see who is using the planes and when.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** So that Ontarians better understand, there are two so-called government planes—there is no plane specific to the Premier. Those two planes are shared, at this point in time, by 26 cabinet ministers, one Premier and one Lieutenant Governor.

By way of comparison, during the first three years of our government, I have used the airplane for 323 hours. During the first three years under the Mike Harris government, Premier Harris used it for 479 hours. Those may have been very legitimate on the part of Premier Harris.

Again, I think there is a reasonable, legitimate expectation on the part of the people of Ontario that their Premiers will work as hard as they can, that they will do business in a way that is expeditious, timely, thorough and vigorous on their behalf. That's what I have done, and that's what I will continue to do.

**Mr. Tory:** The question was about transparency, not about the Premier's hard work, not about the legitimacy of the flights. The question was about transparency. The fact is that what we've got here are some flights written up in the newspaper—I didn't make this stuff up; it's in the newspaper—suggesting there were flights taken that would be empty planes flying around. Some of these flights were so short that if they were in Aeroplan, you'd have to give the points back.

If we want some discipline, if we want some openness, if we want people to be able to see that the flights that are being used, by any Premier, are indeed legitimate flights, then it's a very simple thing we have to do in order to accomplish that, and that is for the Premier to stand in his place and say that, consistent with what is done in other provinces, this information will be made



available on the Internet for all to see. Will the Premier do that?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the official opposition will know that this information is available through freedom of information. But he may not recall—and I'll just read the headline from the Toronto Sun from July 19, 2002: "Tories Deny Access to Plane Logs"—just by way of comparison.

Further to complying with freedom-of-information requests, you will also know that we have, by way of bringing about greater transparency and accountability, widened salary disclosure provisions in Ontario—that's why we know what hydro officials are getting paid now; we've given more powers to the auditor—that's why the auditor was able to conduct a review of children's aid societies; we've banned partisan advertising; and there's a new law that requires that the provincial auditor look at the public finances to reveal their true state prior to an election, so no government can ever hide a \$5.5-billion deficit again. So if we're going to compare who is most committed to transparency—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. New question?

**Mr. Tory:** My question is for the Premier, and again it's on the same topic. What we're talking about here is a simple act that the Premier can undertake, to say, in addition to those other measures you just outlined, that it would be a simple matter, as has been done in other provinces, to make this information on the flight logs available on the Internet so everybody could see.

We have, according to the Hamilton Spectator, records of flights to Hamilton. We have all kinds of flights to and from Ottawa where, according to the Spectator, there are 50 flights a day on commercial airplanes. There's even a suggestion in the Spectator article that the plane was used to go to a Liberal Party event.

In Alberta, the government, for example, publishes this information right away, immediately, online, on the Internet for everybody to see. My question was very simple, and I'll ask it again: Why would the Premier not undertake to make that information available to the public of Ontario so they don't have to go to the time and expense of using the freedom-of-information system? If it's good enough for Alberta, why not for us?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** First of all, I understand that Premier Stelmach is in fact considering that, but that it's not in place now. But that information is available here in Ontario through the freedom-of-information system.

The leader of the official opposition makes reference to empty flights. I want to remind him that from January 2 to August 3 under the Conservative government—that's a full 18 months—there were 96 empty flights: Helen Johns authorized an empty flight from Halifax to Toronto; Jim Wilson, 11 empty flights; Bob Runciman, five empty flights; Tim Hudak, two empty flights. That does not say that those flights were unnecessary. The fact of the matter is, those airplanes can be stored in different places, and from time to time, it's important that you bring those airplanes to you so that you can continue with

government business. That's just the nature of it, and the leader of the official opposition, I know full well, understands that.

**Mr. Tory:** Whatever the number was that the Premier just cited in respect of the previous government—and we know what happened to the previous government. But now we have—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Minister of Education.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Economic Development and Trade will come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** Minister of Municipal Affairs, order. Order, government House leader.

Leader of the Opposition.

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**Mr. Tory:** I'm merely making the point that whatever happened under the previous government, the people had their chance to have judgment on that. I guess what I'm trying to get at here is—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** This cannot happen. When I sit down, we don't start to make noise.

Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** What the Premier would have us believe is that somehow that number of empty flights, and the one that's cited here, 194 times since the Premier took office, that either of those numbers are wrong. The point I'm making in all of my questions so far today has not been about whether those flights were right or wrong, but about the issue of transparency and why the Premier wouldn't stand on his feet and agree to make all of these records public so everybody could then make their own judgment as to whether the empty flights were good, bad or indifferent, however many there were under the Premier's government or anybody else's.

So my question is the same: Doesn't the Premier think it's time to make these flight records available to the public on the Internet, as is done elsewhere, so the public can look at this information? I think it will act as well as a discipline on people using the planes, knowing that it will be made public and that they'll have to account for it. Why wouldn't the Premier agree to that?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the official opposition makes reference to the defeat of the former Conservative government. He disparages his seatmates who formed part of that government quite willingly, and he somehow believes that—well, let me just tell him. Mike Harris and the former Conservative government were not defeated because of the way they used airplanes. They were defeated because they lost sight of the priorities of the people of Ontario, particularly their health care system, their public education, their infrastructure, and the responsibility of their government to put their shoulder to the wheel and improve the quality of the economy and the quality of jobs available to the people of Ontario.



When I get on an airplane, that's what I'm working on. It's their health care, their education, their economy, their infrastructure, their quality of life, their society. That is what I'm doing on behalf of Ontarians.

**Mr. Tory:** The point I'm making is, the Premier just left one thing out, and that is that you are flying on those airplanes paid for by their money, and that is why this information should properly be made public. If the Premier is in fact flying on the planes working on people's health care, education and all the rest, he is still flying on those planes using the taxpayers' money, and that is why it should be treated to the same transparency as many other things are, and in this case it should be and easily could be made available to people on the Internet. For that matter, I'll add to that that we don't know from the Hamilton Spectator article, because the freedom of information did not make it available, who was on those planes besides the Premier, when they had somebody on them at all.

The question would be, why wouldn't the Premier agree at the same time to make the records available of the flights and who was on the planes so that everybody will see? It's all transparent. It's the same as they do in other provinces. Why would the Premier not agree to that?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the official opposition promised us that he was going to raise the level of debate in this place to a higher level, but it's been 147 days since he's asked a question about schools. There are 4,800 schools in Ontario providing education to nearly two million students. You'd think that would be of passing interest to the leader of the official opposition. He hasn't asked a single question on children in 156 days now. He hasn't asked a single question on hospitals in 57 days. There are over 150 hospitals. He doesn't want to ask about our shorter wait times. The more audiences I have the privilege of speaking to, the more they talk to me about the environment and climate change. The leader of the official opposition would rather talk about airplane usage rather than the single greatest challenge facing humanity at the beginning of the 21st century, which is climate change.

I will continue to work hard on behalf of the people of Ontario. I will continue to do the people's business. And from time to time, as and when required and in a prudent and responsible way, I will also use the people's airplane.

**The Speaker:** New question. Leader of the third party.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. Premier, can you tell us how long it takes to drive from Toronto to Hamilton on an average day?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, on behalf of the people of Ontario, sometimes I'm required to be in two or three different places at the same time, and that requires that I use the plane to do that. I'm not going to apologize for that; in fact, I know that the people of Ontario would expect me to do their business and to be in as many places as I possibly can on one particular day. That's why

I have used the plane on occasion to travel to Hamilton. I will do that in the future, if and when it is required and if time does not permit me to travel by car.

**Mr. Hampton:** I appreciate that the Premier might not know how long it takes to drive from Toronto to Hamilton, but for his information, on an average day it will take an hour or a little more. The last time I drove to Hamilton and back, it took about \$15 for gas. Can the Premier tell people—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The Minister of the Environment will come to order. The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs will come to order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** I need to be able to hear the question. The member needs to be able to place the question in a manner that is respectful. Leader of the—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. I haven't even sat down yet, and the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities has input that I don't need. Leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** Since the Premier can't tell us how long it takes to drive from Toronto to Hamilton, maybe he can tell us how much of the public's money he spent on October 24, 2004, to fly from Toronto to Hamilton.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, from time to time, I—as well as other cabinet ministers, and the Lieutenant Governor, for that matter—require the use of the government plane.

We think it's really important that we do that in a way that is responsible, prudent and in keeping with the legitimate expectations of the people of Ontario. My sense of the people of Ontario is that they want us to work as hard as we can to improve the quality of their public services to the best of our ability and to do so in the execution of our responsibilities in a way that's financially responsible. I think that's exactly what they expect of us, and that's exactly what we're doing on their behalf.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, I'm told that October 24, 2004, was a Sunday, a day on which the traffic between Toronto and Hamilton would have been relatively light, and according to the Hamilton Spectator, your flight to Hamilton and back would have cost about \$10,000.

So, Premier, my question is this: Can you tell people across Ontario why it costs about 600 times more for the Premier of Ontario to go between Toronto and Hamilton than it costs the average working person?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I can't recall on October 24 of which year how many events I had scheduled for that day. But I can say again that I understand how hard our families work. I understand the sacrifices made when they pay their taxes. I understand that that imposes a heavy corresponding responsibility on me and my colleagues in government to do the very best that we can to manage the privileged position in which we find ourselves.

From time to time, yes, I do have need of the government airplane. I share that with all of my cabinet and I



share that with the Lieutenant Governor, and I will continue to do so in a responsible and prudent manner.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, the fact that you may have to use the government plane from time to time—I don't think people take issue with that. But I think most people across Ontario would say, "Isn't it passing strange that on a Sunday afternoon, when traffic is relatively light, the Premier would spend \$10,000 of public money to fly from Toronto to Hamilton?" But what's even more interesting is that our critic in estimates asked several questions of you and your officials about how much you were using the government plane, and we got no answers. In fact, nowhere was this disclosed. It had to go through freedom of information. So my question to the Premier is this: If you think you needed to fly from Toronto to Hamilton, why did you try to hide it from public disclosure?

1430

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** That kind of information is available through freedom-of-information-request channels. I don't hide the fact that, from time to time, I use the government airplane. Again, I share that with the cabinet. Those two airplanes are also made available for emergency purposes for the benefit of all Ontarians. But from time to time, I need to be places where I've got to get there really fast, and I've got to get to other places subsequent to that just as quickly. It's a big province, there's a lot of ground to cover, and there is, Ontarians would tell me, no substitute for being physically present in their community from time to time. You cannot govern this province by staying exclusively within Toronto or the greater Toronto area; you've got to get around. And the way that we do that is in keeping with the expectations of the people of Ontario. They work hard; we need to work hard on their behalf. They're responsible with their limited dollars, and we have to be just as responsible with the limited dollars that they give us.

**Mr. Hampton:** We did some checking: It takes about a half an hour to get from your office at Queen's Park down to Toronto harbour, take the ferry across and get on a plane. Then it takes about 15 or 20 minutes to fly to Hamilton, land the plane, another 10 minutes to get the plane in and get off it, and then about 15 minutes to drive to downtown Hamilton. In that time, you could have easily driven from Toronto to Hamilton.

But my question is this: In other provinces, every flight that Premiers and cabinet ministers take is fully disclosed on the Internet. We asked repeatedly at estimates about how much you were using the government plane, how much it was costing, and we got no answers. So Premier, if you think you needed to use the government plane to fly from Toronto to Hamilton, why did you try to hide it? Why did it have to go through freedom of information to get that kind of disclosure?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** If my memory serves me right, I recall the issue of the day when somebody asked then-Premier Bob Rae why he'd used a government helicopter to go to his cottage.

We all understand that we have to behave responsibly in our management of Ontario tax dollars. We all under-

stand—at least, I like to think that we all understand—how hard our families work to make ends meet, the sacrifices required in order to pay their taxes, and we have a corresponding responsibility in government to manage their money prudently and responsibly. That's something I assume we all share.

Now, how do we reconcile that with airplane use? Well, from time to time, in order to do the people's business, you've got to use an airplane. It's a big province, and you've got to move around. You've got to get to a number of places, and you've got to get from one place to another quickly. That's what I've had to do in the past, and I will continue to do that in the future on behalf of the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, if you're referring to Rose-dale Bob, the wannabe leader of the federal Liberal Party, to justify your situation, good luck to you.

Working families across Ontario are indeed struggling, and they'd like to see some real leadership from the McGuinty government. But when they look at the McGuinty government, what they see are McGuinty Liberals helping themselves to \$10,000 flights between Toronto and Hamilton, McGuinty Liberals helping themselves to government grants for Liberal friends, and McGuinty Liberals helping themselves to \$40,000-a-year pay raises.

I say again to you, Premier—you seek to justify this—tell us this: When our member from York South-Weston asked repeated questions in estimates committee about how much you were using the government plane, about how much it costs, why did you refuse to answer at every turn? Why did we have to go—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the NDP may be quick to distance himself from Bob Rae, although at one particular time he was proud to run under that ticket and proud to serve under him in his government. I was very proud of the work that Bob Rae did on behalf of the people of Ontario in laying the foundation for our Reaching Higher plan, which is resulting in an additional \$6.2-billion investment in post-secondary education. I'm also proud to have retained the services of Ernie Eves, who's performing remarkably well in terms of helping us to attract still more foreign direct investment into our province.

On the subject of the airplane, I know it's a sensitive issue to my friends. I will continue to use the airplane in the same way I've used it in the past: in a responsible and prudent way, in keeping with the very legitimate expectations of the people of Ontario. They work hard, they want me to work hard for them and they want me to do the people's business—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question?

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** A question to the Premier: Today's Hamilton Spectator reports that Dalton McGuinty has gone Hollywood—big time. He is regularly taking short-hop flights from Toronto to Hamilton, Toronto to Niagara, and Toronto to Peterborough. In fact, Premier, if these flights were any shorter, you'd probably qualify for a Metropass.



I have two questions for the Premier. First, how can the Premier justify using taxpayer dollars for these short-hops when we're seeing 140,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs flee the province of Ontario under Dalton McGuinty, including many in Hamilton and Niagara? Secondly, Premier, when you fly from Hamilton to Toronto, do you get jet lag?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** It's cute and it's contrived. They put significant work into that, I could tell. But there are still no questions about schools, no questions about hospitals, no questions about health care, no questions about our most vulnerable, no questions about the environment, no questions about those kinds of things that I would argue weigh heavily on the minds of Ontarians. I am pleased to continue to take questions from the official opposition and the NDP, but at some point, I would hope that they're going to ask about those kinds of things that concern Ontarians in a very direct and immediate sense.

**Mr. Hudak:** With respect to the Premier, I asked you very clearly how you can justify these short-hop flights in light of 140,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs in Ontario fleeing. It's not on your list, notably, when you listed what you want to be questioned on, but I'm going to ask you again about that. When you look at Hamilton and Niagara: Stelco, 700 jobs shed; Dana auto parts in Thorold, 537 jobs; Slater Steel in Hamilton, 360 jobs; Blue Bird Corp. in Brantford, 130 jobs. The list goes on and on. And, Premier, when you're landing at those airports, they're not exactly waving with fondness. They're waving pink slips from these well-paying manufacturing jobs that have fled the province of Ontario under your high-tax, high-energy, runaway spending regime.

Premier, you promised some time ago for a plan to bring these jobs back to Ontario. Instead, we see you wasting dollars on these flights. Premier, look into the eyes of those folks in Hamilton and Niagara who were laid off and justify these short-hop flights.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** We're really proud of the work we've been able to do with the people of Hamilton. We invested tens of millions of dollars and over a year and a half of intensive negotiations to restore Stelco to its vitality and its strength and its vigour and to preserve those jobs.

There's more good news happening. In addition to the 320,000 net new jobs—75% of which are full time—in Guelph recently there was an announcement: Skyjack is investing in new products and technology, a \$25-million investment. They're creating over 350 new jobs. Superior Propane has just announced that they're moving their administration from Calgary to Thunder Bay. That's up to 100 new jobs. They looked at 12 different cities across North America and they chose Thunder Bay. And my Minister of Economic Development and Trade tells me that we are now in active discussions with GM to land a new \$400-million investment in St. Catharines. There is good news to be had here.

1440

**The Speaker:** New question?

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** To the Premier: Every day working people drive from Niagara to

Toronto to work and then drive back home again in the evening. I drive to Welland regularly from Toronto. My colleague from Hamilton East drives, takes the GO train or takes the GO bus to Hamilton. Your Minister of Tourism drives along the QEW back and forth to Niagara. I ask, is the Premier so out of touch with working people in this province that he's got to take a 10- to 15-minute flight to get to Niagara Falls?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I've had the great good fortune, as Premier, to be driven more times than I want to recall to Hamilton, St. Catharines and Niagara Falls. But from time to time, I've got to get there really fast and I've got to get back really fast, or I've got to get to another community in Ontario very fast. You would understand that, Mr. Speaker, because you are in part of the great northern Ontario and you understand distances.

So from time to time, yes, I will be called upon to use a plane. But overwhelmingly, I'm riding in the back of the car, where, frankly, more often it's much more comfortable and much easier to get work done. But from time to time, as I say, time simply requires that I get into an airplane, get to someplace fast and get to another place just as fast.

**Mr. Kormos:** If the Premier really wanted to get to Niagara Falls fast, he would have had Bradley drive him. Maybe the Premier took the plane to Niagara Falls, Ontario, because he didn't think he could afford the gas prices.

You may not be aware of this, but GO Transit from Toronto to Hamilton costs \$17.70. Page, will you take the Premier a timetable? Come on, take the Premier a timetable for GO Transit.

Look, working folks in this province are working hard, the ones who still have jobs. They're paying taxes. They don't get a break. The Premier gives himself a \$40,000 annual salary increase, and now he's flying high on the government plane on the taxpayer's tab. Is the use of the government plane for a 10-minute flight gluttony or is it merely the Premier's flight fetish?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, whenever it's possible, I will drive to places like Hamilton, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Peterborough and points in between. But from time to time, I've got to get there really fast and I've got to get to some place subsequent to that really fast as well.

Speaker, you would understand what I'm talking about, because you've had the opportunity to be inside, I believe, one of those government planes. They are not the lap of luxury. They are not jets. They may be four or four and a half feet tall; I cannot stand up in those things. If we encounter any turbulence at all, I have to crunch down, because the first time we had turbulence, my head struck the ceiling and I had a headache for about three days. We're not talking about the lap of luxury in these airplanes. So if there is a choice, for a short hop, I always prefer to go in a car. But from time to time, I've got to get someplace fast and return to some other place quickly.



## AUTISM TREATMENT

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** My question is for the Minister of Education. As a former educator and a principal, I know that our government has ended the Conservative cut-off age of six for students with autism. We increased the number of children receiving IBI services by 105%, we tripled the support for children with autism and their families since 2003-04, and we increased funding to nearly \$130 million in 2007-08.

I would like to pose to the minister a very simple question. So far, we've got an improved record of ensuring success for all of our students in Ontario, including our students with autism. What are we going to do to ensure that the needs of our students and kids with autism are taken care of in our schools?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** I was very pleased to be able to announce today nearly six million new dollars being invested in new autism initiatives to help students succeed.

**Interjection:** Hear, hear. Great news.

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** It is great news, and it's particularly great news because of what this money is going to go towards.

First of all, we have issued a policy program memorandum to the system that will require boards to provide ABA, which is applied behaviour analysis, in their schools, and we are providing funding for the training—\$1 million for training for teachers, education assistants, education professionals—over the summer before Labour Day so that teachers and education assistants can be ready in the fall; \$2 million for collaborative programming, cross-ministry programming that will allow for a continuum of service; and, thirdly, we've provided \$2.7 million for the Geneva Centre to continue training into the fall to build capacity in the system.

**Mr. Levac:** I want to thank the minister for the steps that she's taking to improve the situation for the kids with autism, and I think it's appreciated by those who receive any assistance at all. I appreciate that very much.

One of the interesting things I learned, though, today from the front page of the *Toronto Star* was about summer camps for children with autism. It seems that the federal Conservative government cut the funding for that program this year. Minister, these camps provide help to families and kids to train new workers and to provide a home for those kids during the summertime. I think the federal government has made a very large mistake.

I do want to provide you with this challenge, though: I don't want to count on the Conservative federal government; I want to know what we can do as a provincial government. So I ask the minister if she can tell us if our government can step in where the Conservatives have failed those children.

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** To the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services):** I was actually very surprised to read that article this morning. I would like

the Yes I Can! organization to know that I have asked my ministry officials to work with them for their summer camp, and I look forward to being able to confirm with them that we will make sure that summer camp continues for these kids. We, the government of Ontario, will invest the \$38,000 that they have lost in order to ensure that these kids can continue to have a summer camp.

I also think it is wonderful that these university students have the opportunity to work at this camp, because we know in this province that we have to build the capacity of the system to support kids with autism, and hopefully these university students will go on to be therapists.

## PREMIER'S SPENDING

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** My question is also to the Premier. You've talked in here today about the fact that you're very busy and sometimes you need to be in many different places throughout the course of a day.

I would like to remind you that all 103 people in this House have many days when we need to be in many, many different places. However, I would also remind you that we don't have the luxury of an airplane. In fact, earlier this week the member from Nickel Belt and I spent over four hours on the road at the end of the day to address some stakeholders. This is what we go through. We all try to do what we can and, sometimes, because we don't have a private plane, we have to say no.

What we're asking you today is, simply, will you agree to post on the Internet? Will you be accountable and will you be transparent to the taxpayers of this province and post the information as to your flying times and whom you're flying with?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The member opposite tells us that she spends a lot of time working, as does each and every one of the members here. Whether you're in opposition or in government, the responsibilities here can be onerous. I know; I spent 13 years in opposition. I have fond memories, but with no eagerness to return.

I can say that there's just the one Premier and the office—it's not the individual—requires that there are things that you must do that nobody else can do. And that requires that I do a considerable amount of travel. Where I can accomplish that in a car expeditiously, I will do that, but from time to time my responsibilities simply require that I use the government plane, and I do that.

1450

**Mrs. Witmer:** I want to go back to the question I just asked. As I say, it's not about using the plane; it's about making sure that taxpayers in the province are aware of what is happening, that you lead by example, show transparency, show that you're accountable for their money. I ask you again, will you put this information on the Internet so everyone will know what's going on?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I want to remind the honourable member again that they fought tooth and nail



against releasing information under the freedom of information act when it came to gaining access to airplane logs. That information was obtained; it is accessible by the public, hence the basis for the questions here today. I think it's important that Ontarians be entitled to put questions to me about the use of their airplane. It is a privilege for me to be able to use that airplane, and I treat it as such, and I do use it from time to time in keeping with my responsibilities.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question. The member from Timmins–James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** My question is to the Premier. You would know that I'm both a pilot and own my own aircraft. You will also know that within my constituency, I often have to use my own aircraft to fly to communities such as Attawapiskat, Moosonee and others. I want to propose the following: I would never utilize my own aircraft to fly from Toronto to Hamilton for one simple reason: By the time I leave Queen's Park, get to Toronto Island Airport, get clearance, take off and land in Hamilton, get out of the aircraft, find a car and drive downtown, I can get to Hamilton much faster. If I can figure that out from the opposition benches, how can you justify using a King Air for 10,000 bucks to get to Hamilton when you can do it faster by car?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, if a car is faster, I'll use a car. But it depends on how many events I have on a particular day and how many parts of the province I'm expected to be in and how many commitments I've made to Ontarians to be in their communities. I know there's always a lot of fun to be had with these kinds of things, but I have faith in the people of Ontario. Their expectations are legitimate and reasonable. They want me to use the plane only so much as is necessary, and that's what I do. They want me to understand that for me to use their airplane is a privilege, but it's also part of my responsibilities to use that to accomplish their ends, and I do that. I welcome the questions, but I will continue to use the airplane in the future in the same way I have used it in the past: prudently and responsibly.

**Mr. Bisson:** Premier, I'll tell you that I, as a member of this assembly, have to account for any travel I do, because I'm subject to the act. For the travel I do as a member, the mileage is recorded. But if I charter in my riding, I have to produce manifests under the rules of the House—check with the Board of Internal Economy; that's the case. It's an issue of transparency.

I have no argument with the Premier utilizing government aircraft. I charter aircraft in my riding. I use my own airplane. I understand the issue. But the issue is transparency. And one way to make sure that people are not using those privileges excessively is to make sure we have a transparent way of being able to account for how we utilize services such as aircraft. So I ask, why would you not live by the same rules that the leaders of the opposition have to live by, and other members in this House, when it comes to transparency and being able to produce the manifests and why you had to use the aircraft and when?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, there are two airplanes to accommodate 26 cabinet ministers, one Premier and one Lieutenant Governor. It's a big province, and from time to time we've got to use those airplanes in order to carry out government business. Perhaps the NDP would be satisfied if I were to walk to different communities in the province of Ontario. They may resent the fact that I have an OPP driver. But that's part and parcel of privileges associated with the Office of the Premier. They're responsible; I will continue to use those in a responsible and prudent way, and I will not lose sight of just how hard Ontario families work and how hard they work to sacrifice the tax we use here, and we will continue to use those revenues in a responsible way to their benefit.

### SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I have a question for the Minister of Health Promotion. About a year ago, we stood in this House and passed the historic Smoke-Free Ontario Act, and in that year, in the riding of Mississauga West, I have heard nothing but good things about it. My city councillors have come to me to say, "Finally, we have a level playing field when it comes to commercial businesses." People have come to me and said, "Finally, we can go into a place without worrying about the smell of stale cigarette smoke."

Many forward-thinking jurisdictions are joining Ontario; for example, Quebec, Ireland and Paris. I'm very proud of our new legislation and the fact that we continue to be at the cutting edge. Can you tell me what other good things are happening in Ontario as a result of the implementation of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act?

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I want to thank the honourable member from Mississauga West. I have some good news to report. Thanks to the willpower of the people of Ontario, our community partners and the McGuinty government's record investments in the smoke-free Ontario strategy, tobacco consumption rates are down 18.7% in the province of Ontario.

But while we celebrate this good news, I have to remind members, and those members of the public who are watching, the only political party that did not support this act unanimously was the Tory party. Let me remind the members who didn't vote for this: Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke; Erie–Lincoln; Oak Ridges; Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound; Oxford; and Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant.

The latest self-appointed superstar of the Tory party, Mr. Randy Hillier, has some interesting comments on the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. When asked about selling illegal tobacco, he said, "We'll break the law." He was in Smith Falls encouraging the opening of a smoking lounge—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Delaney:** As a supplementary, some of my constituents occasionally reference an entity called



Mychoice. My understanding is that Mychoice is funded by big tobacco, and that organization is trying its best to tarnish our government's reputation for taking a reasonable, commendable and forward-thinking stand against the tobacco industry.

I'm worried about any campaign to tarnish the image of people who are trying to stop smoking. Can you tell me why it is that Mychoice continues to have news conferences here at Queen's Park, and if indeed they pose a threat to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act?

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** Every time Mychoice, which is funded 100% by the big tobacco industry, has a press conference, you know who they call on to sponsor the press conference? It's the two tobacco lobbyists within the Tory caucus: Tobacco Tim and Tobacco Toby. They're the ones who sponsor the press conference room. It's sad that the Leader of the Opposition does not stand up and denounce the association of his party with big tobacco and an organization that's determined to undermine and scrap the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

In Ottawa, the Prime Minister doesn't let his caucus speak, but here in Ontario, the PC caucus doesn't let their leader speak. I urge the Leader of the Opposition to stand up to the renegades within his party, stand with us—with Heart and Stroke, the Canadian Cancer Society and the diabetes association—as we prevent thousands and thousands of people from even starting to smoke in the first place.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. We're wasting time.  
New question?

1500

#### PREMIER'S SPENDING

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** My question is for the Premier. Premier, what we've seen today is just another example of your government's disregard for hard-working taxpayers and their money, many of whom have lost their jobs under your watch, 140,000 in the manufacturing sector alone. Let's take a look at Windsor: 1,300 at DaimlerChrysler, 1,200 at Ford and hundreds more in the hospitality sector are going or gone. How does the Premier square that with his practice of spending a million dollars on flights simply to avoid the traffic on the highways?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I always appreciate the rhetorical flourishes of my friend from the Ottawa Valley, which has a wonderful tradition in terms of producing good speakers.

I want to remind my friend opposite of something from July 19, 2002. There was an article in the Toronto Sun at that time, "Who's Flyin' Now? Tories Deny Access to Plane Logs." It goes on to say: "Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources, which maintains the planes, has declined freedom of information requests from at least two media outlets requesting the lists. The issue failed to be resolved in an appeal by one applicant and is

currently headed for the next level of dispute called adjudication." The government of the day worked as hard as it possibly could to deny access to information which otherwise would have been made available through freedom-of-information requests.

The information has been made available through that system. It has been made available to the Hamilton Spectator, and that's the information that is out there today.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Premier, what we have in practice, and what I'm sure the people of Windsor would like to be made aware of if they're not already, are practices such as that by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, who took a government flight to Windsor and gave her husband a ride on the way back to Toronto at the taxpayers' expense.

Premier, if you want to end the questions around that kind of use of your planes, why don't you do the opposite of what you're chastising the former government for and release those logs and make them available to the public? The people have the right to decide whether your use of the plane is one that is justified or whether you're simply trying to avoid the gridlock that you've helped create in this province.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I've said it several times, and I'm pleased to continue saying it—although I hope at some point in time there'll be a question about health care, education, something about supports for the vulnerable, something about climate change and the environment generally. But what I can say is that from time to time I will be called upon, in keeping with the effective execution of my responsibilities, just carrying out my job, to take one of the government planes, and I do that. I've done that in the past. If it's faster for me to get in the car, believe me, I prefer to do that. But from time to time, I am required to be somewhere quickly and somewhere else beyond that just as quickly. That requires that I use the government plane, but I do so in a way that's prudent and responsible.

#### NORTHERN ONTARIO

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** I have a question to the Premier. Premier, in the galleries today are two individuals from northern Ontario, one is Al Strong, the president—I do that all the time. One is Al Simard, the president of STRONG—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bisson:** No, I know him quite well—along with J.C. Nolet, who is the vice-president of STRONG. This is a community group that was born out of the experience of Opasatika losing their only employer. STRONG has signed more than 6,000 members across northeastern and northwestern Ontario and has been working to advocate on behalf of the north to have policies that would help mitigate the job losses that we've seen in the northern Ontario forest industry. They have communicated with a number of municipalities across the north and asked for resolutions to be sent to this government that call for the government to do a few things. One is to make sure that



when a mill shuts down, the trees, the timber that's associated with that mill stays with the community, and the forest company is not allowed to take off and bring the trees where they want them, and number two, to make sure that, at end of the day, we have regional electricity policies when it comes to regional pricing in northern Ontario. I would like to send over, through the page, these particular resolutions and ask you, are you prepared to support what over 50 municipalities in the north are asking—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked. Premier.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm pleased to take the question and pleased to receive the resolutions. It appears to be a fairly impressive package of materials, so obviously I cannot speak to that in any detail, having received it just now.

But what I can say to our visitors who are here from the north and to my colleague opposite is that we will continue to work with northern Ontarians. We will continue to do the kinds of things we've been doing in the past, including putting in place our \$1-billion forest sector strategy. We also have in place a \$1.8-billion, five-year northern Ontario highway strategy, the first commitment of its kind for northern highways. I'm also pleased to report that we've invested over \$1 billion in hospitals and health capital in communities like Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay, Timmins, Mattawa, Thunder Bay and Sudbury. Is there more work to be done? Of course there is, but we remain very much committed to working in a collaborative way with the people of northern Ontario.

**Mr. Bisson:** The problem, Premier, is that there will be nobody left working in northern Ontario once we're finished with what your government has started in not assisting these communities. You have over 50 municipalities that have sent you resolutions. These are 50 municipalities that have municipal councillors, elected by the people of their communities, who are asking you to do a number of specific things that have been asked of you before.

I ask you again. We need help in northern Ontario. We're asking you, specifically on public policy, to ensure that, if a mill shuts down, the timber is not reallocated away from that community. Are you prepared today, here in this House, to say yes to those 50 municipalities that are asking you to do so?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** That's a question I will happily refer to the Minister of Natural Resources and get his best advice on that, because I'm not familiar with the specifics of the issue.

But what I can say, again, is that we will continue to work with the people of northern Ontario. I'm just not nearly as pessimistic as my colleague is. The fact of the matter is, there are some really good things happening in northern Ontario, and some significant job creation has been taking place in northern Ontario. We will continue to find ways to work with northerners.

One thing we did, for example, is that we created a new Northern Ontario Medical School. It was the first new medical school to open up in Canada in over 30 years. We have expanded and refocused \$60 million into our northern Ontario heritage fund to foster job creation. We have \$166 million for northern infrastructure in things like roads, bridges, water, recreation and culture, and community energy projects. The north is filled with great potential, and we will continue to work with—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

#### SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. I know that due to your leadership, the leadership of the Premier and my good friend the member for Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, each and every member of our caucus has signed the FarmGate5 pledge, unlike members opposite in the Progressive Conservative Party, where I see that there are three members missing in action. Actually one of their members, the member from Oak Ridges, signed the pledge and then got up in this House and said that he thought supply management could be optional. In Perth county, we know there is nothing that is optional about supply management.

My question to the minister is this: Given the importance in Perth county of supply management, what are we, on our side of the House, doing to support supply management? That is a crucial issue in the upcoming election.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** I'm always happy to receive a question from the member from Perth–Middlesex, who really understands the agriculture industry and works so very hard in his constituency. He truly does.

With respect to his concern about support for supply management in Ontario, he's very justified in voicing this, and I'm very proud that our government introduced a motion in this Legislature and that it was supported by all parties. We are committed.

I'm very happy to report as well that I represented this government at the World Trade Organization's talks in Hong Kong to make it very clear that the province of Ontario is absolutely committed to supply management.

What I also hear from supply management farmers is that they are also looking for additional supports. What I can say, in terms of the financial support that this government has put toward all farmers: We have spent, in our four years in office, as much as the previous government spent—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. The member from Niagara Centre is being more than helpful. The member for Perth–Middlesex.

1510

**Mr. Wilkinson:** On behalf of all of my constituents, particularly those in supply management, I want to thank



the minister for her stalwart support of supply management in our province. I know that my phone has been ringing off the hook because there is some concern in Perth county, farmers in Middlesex and in Wellington, about the fact that the federal Conservatives seem to be undermining supply management, particularly out west. Then I hear about a new candidate in the new riding of Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington, someone who purports to be a Conservative, who says that he is going to have a very strong influence on the platform of the Progressive Conservative Party in the next election. I know that he doesn't support supply management; he has said that over and over again.

I want to ask the minister: What can she do to reassure all of the members, particularly in our party, who have all signed the FarmGate5 pledge, exactly what we need to do to make sure that the disastrous policy they're planning over there is never perpetrated—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Minister?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** What I can say to the honourable member is that he should communicate to the farmers in his riding that under a McGuinty government we are absolutely, 100%, committed to supporting supply management in this province. I think that he has raised a very valid concern in that the Conservative candidate for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington has made it very clear that he's no friend to supply management. In fact, Randy Hillier has indicated that he deplores the supply management sector and he calls farmers in that sector "welfare farmers." He indicates that supply management is a false security for farmers and that farmers are foolish to believe that supply management will provide prosperity.

We in the McGuinty government know that supply management does provide prosperity. We are committed to supply management. I'm concerned because Randy Hillier has indicated he's going to be advising the opposition leader on their ag. policy. I think it's important that people know—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

## ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** I have a question for the Premier. Premier, much has been said, and rightly said, about the \$1 million of taxpayers' money that you feel you're entitled to for these puddle-jumping flights to Niagara and Peterborough. Over 140,000 manufacturing job losses have happened under your watch. Some of those losses happened in Peterborough, including the closure of MasterBrand Cabinets, National Grocers service, Transcontinental Book Printing and, most recently in my riding in Lindsay, Fleetwood.

Premier, at one point you referred to these job losses as a hiccup. It's nothing like the cabin-pressure hiccups that you're so familiar with. When are you going to show some respect for the taxpayers' money and the members of this Legislature, which you have promised to do, come out from above the clouds and bring forward the com-

prehensive jobs plan that members from all parties voted for over 16 months ago? Premier, when are you going to bring that jobs strategy forward?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I thank the member for the question. But let me say that one of the reasons that I use the airplane is to work as hard as I can to bring new jobs to Ontario and to go to different communities and speak with them about their economic potential, to meet with people who are working hard on the ground, and for our government to act in a complementary way. So whether you're talking about our auto sector strategy, our forestry sector strategy, our advanced manufacturing strategy or our agriculture strategy, you're talking billions of dollars there. We're working as hard as we can, together with Ontarians, to enhance the quality of their local economies to ensure that they have jobs that will sustain them long into the future. That's part and parcel of the trip that I take by airplane.

## VISITORS

**Hon. Caroline Di Cocco (Minister of Culture):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I am really pleased to have visiting me today my grandchildren, Olivia Rose and Matteo, with their mom, Kimberly, and my husband, Don.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** At this point, I would like to bring to the attention of members that the clock on this side of the chamber is not totally functional, and while it does provide countdown time, it does not tell the real time. You will need to use the clock at the end of the chamber if you are trying to tell the time of day.

## PETITIONS

### STEVENSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Stevenson Memorial Hospital needs \$1.4 million in new funding over the next three years to get its birthing unit reopened and to ensure that they can recruit enough obstetricians and health care providers to supply a stable and ongoing service for expectant mothers in our area; and

"Whereas forcing expectant mothers to drive to Newmarket, Barrie or Orangeville to give birth is not only unacceptable, it is a potential safety hazard; and

"Whereas Stevenson Memorial Hospital cannot reopen the unit under its current budget and the McGuinty government has been unresponsive to repeated requests for new funding;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the McGuinty Liberal government immediately provide the required \$1.4 million in new funding to Stevenson Memorial Hospital so that the local birthing unit can reopen and so that mothers can give birth in Alliston."

I've signed that petition and I agree with it.

### WORKPLACE SAFETY

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the laws that govern health and safety in the workplace do not address the prevention of psychological harassment and all forms of psychological abuse in the workplace, this is a request for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact the following bill:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To implement 'the province of Ontario non-violent obligation in the workplace now—mental health bill' in order to protect Ontario workers from psychological harassment and all forms of psychological abuse in the workplace.

"Repeated psychological trauma, consciously or unconsciously induced in a workplace, can result in trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder. Post-traumatic stress disorder is a serious psychiatric injury. Workplace psychological trauma can result in suicide. This bill protects the mental health of Ontario workers. This bill puts the responsibility on employers to ensure psychologically healthy workplaces."

I agree with this petition and affix my signature hereto.

### GTA POOLING

**Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale):** This petition is to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

"End GTA Pooling: Pass Ontario Budget

"Whereas the city of Mississauga faces a long-term labour shortage, resulting in some 60,000 more people commuting into the city of Mississauga than leave Mississauga to earn their living and support their families each and every day; and

"Whereas 10 years ago the Ontario government of that day introduced the concept of GTA pooling, whereby funds are taken from the municipalities surrounding the city of Toronto and channelled into the city of Toronto without benefit or accountability to the taxpayers of those fast-growing cities, which face big-city needs and issues of their own; and

"Whereas GTA pooling places an additional tax burden on the municipal property tax bases of some \$40 million each and every year to the city of Mississauga; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario in its 2007-08 budget proposes to completely eliminate GTA pooling during a seven-year span beginning in fiscal year 2007-

08, and that as pooling is phased out, Ontario will take responsibility for social assistance and social housing costs currently funded by GTA pooling;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That all parties within the government of Ontario support the swift passage of the 2007-08 Ontario budget and ensure that its provisions ending GTA pooling are implemented."

I agree with the petitioners, and I put my signature on it as well.

### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** "Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions; ...

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I agree with this petition, and I'd be pleased to give it to Ali to take to the table.

1520

### NORTHERN ONTARIO

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Petitions? The member for Timmins–James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** Oh, them Tories are trying to block my way here to be recognized.

I have a petition signed by literally thousands of people from the Kapuskasing area and probably further than that, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas the McGuinty government has failed to protect the interests of communities in northern Ontario by allowing companies to shut down mills and redirect wood supplies outside the local region; and

"Whereas the current Ontario Liberal government has continued to implement disastrous energy policies that are crippling northern Ontario industries; and

"Whereas the McGuinty government supports Stephen Harper's unfair and unsustainable softwood lumber agreement with the United States; and

"Whereas the McGuinty Liberal government has failed to pursue the return of unfair and illegal tariffs on softwood lumber that should be returned in full; and

"Whereas the Liberal government has neglected to adequately promote the development of value added initiatives to maintain employment levels and to reinvest the wealth generated in northern Ontario; and

"Whereas the Liberals have disregarded potential solutions put forth by industries, unions, communities, and the citizens of northern Ontario;



"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To reverse the policies outlined above that are destroying the economic and social fabric of northern Ontario and to implement policies that protect workers in the forestry and mining sectors; and

"To make sure that wood harvested in the vicinity of existing forest-dependent communities is processed locally as much as is practical and is traded for the best end use to ensure fair and equitable exchange of fibre; and

"To implement regional energy pricing policies that utilize hydroelectricity surpluses generated in northern Ontario for economic development initiatives that are"—

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** Is that all the pages?

**Mr. Bisson:** Not all the pages; there's lots of problems in northern Ontario.

**Mr. Hudak:** I understand.

**Mr. Bisson:** There we go—"aimed at stabilizing northern Ontario economies; and

"To promote value added initiatives to build solid foundations for forest industries in northern Ontario before it's totally decimated; and

"To refuse to allow companies to separate hydro dams from lumber and pulp and paper operations; and

"To initiate and implement sectoral strategies to ensure that communities in northern Ontario remain sustainable despite inevitable economic downturns and recycle primary resources in industry."

I am signing that petition, along with thousands of northerners.

#### PARENTING EDUCATION

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** "Whereas effective parenting practices do not come instinctively and parenting is our most crucial social role, parenting and human development courses need to be taught to all secondary school students. Parenting education will: reduce teen pregnancies; reduce the rate of costly fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and increase the number of healthy pregnancies; reduce the number of costly social problems related to ineffective parenting practices; and improve the 'social fabric' of Ontario to create a more civil society. Parenting education for students is considered to be socially valuable by a majority of adults of voting age and should be included as a mandatory credit course within the Ontario curriculum;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the requirements for the Ontario secondary school diploma" to include one senior level course in parenting education as a compulsory credit.

I agree with this and will sign it and pass it off to Dillon.

#### ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) is a registered charity and private police force autonomously enforcing federal, provincial and municipal animal laws under the provincial animal act without any type of provincial oversight or accountability mechanism in place; and

"Whereas, in 2006, resigned OSPCA director and treasurer Garnet Lasby stated, 'Government, not the humane society, should be in charge of enforcing laws to protect animals and to prosecute offenders'; and

"Whereas, in 1989, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) formally requested the province ... to remove police powers from the OSPCA; and

"Whereas, in 2006, the Ontario Farm Animal Council (OFAC) stated, 'The number of questions and complaints from the farm community about specific cases and the current enforcement system continues to increase'; and

"Whereas the Animal Care Review Board, a tribunal staffed by volunteers, is the only OSPCA appeals mechanism available outside the court system; and

"Whereas the OSPCA recently received \$1.8 million from the province and is lobbying for additional long-term stable funding;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to ensure that members of the Animal Care Review Board tribunal are adequately trained in accepted provincial livestock practices and have some legal training to rule competently on issues brought before them; and

"(2) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to investigate the resignation of 29 OSPCA directors ... who in May 2006 urged 'the province to step in and investigate insane abuse and animal cruelty charges'; and

"(3) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to appoint an ombudsman to investigate allegations of abuses of police powers against the OSPCA."

Thank you very much for allowing me to present this petition on behalf of my constituents.

#### SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDING

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Fairness for Families in the 905 Belt

"Whereas the population of the greater Toronto region will increase by an estimated four million more people in the next generation, with the bulk of that growth coming in the 905 belt of fast-growing cities located north, east and west of Metro Toronto; and

"Whereas these cities are already large and dynamic population units, with big-city issues and big-city needs, requiring big-city resources to implement big-city solutions to social issues and human services needs;

"Whereas the 2007-08 Ontario budget proposes aggressive and badly needed increases in operating funding to build and strengthen capacity in developmental and social services agencies and to invest in helping the young, the weak, the needy and the vulnerable; and

"Whereas the social and human services sectors in the 905 belt have historically received per capital funding far below that of other regions despite facing far greater growth in the populations they serve, and this per capita funding gap has increased in the last four years;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the 2007-08 Ontario budget implementing measures to strengthen Ontario's families be passed without delay, and that the first priority for the allocation of new funding in meeting the government of Ontario's commitment to fairness for families flow to the social services agencies serving cities within the 905 belt, and that funding for programs to serve the 905 belt be allocated to established or growing agencies located within the 905 belt."

I agree with this and sign my name to the petition. It will be delivered by page Rhiannon.

#### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario.

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I support that petition, and I send it down with page Zachary.

#### REGULATION OF ZOOS

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I have a petition today from the folks in Courtice, Bowmanville, Ajax, Oshawa and Peterborough.

"Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

"Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

"Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

"Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife, and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and

"Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act."

I support this and will affix my signature to it.

#### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I'm pleased to present this petition to the Legislature, signed by more 500 students at St. Michael's College School in Toronto. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

As the proud proponent of this bill, I'm pleased to affix my signature.

1530

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Pursuant to standing order 55, I rise to give the Legislature the business of the House for the week of May 28.

On Monday, May 28, 2007, in the afternoon, third reading of Bill 171, Health System Improvements Act; in the evening, third reading of Bill 203, the road safety act.

On Tuesday, May 29, 2007, in the afternoon is the PC opposition day.

On the rest of the week, the House leaders are in conversation as to how we can order the business of the House in the most appropriate fashion.



## ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROVINCIAL ADVOCATE FOR  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACT, 2007LOI DE 2007 SUR L'INTERVENANT  
PROVINCIAL EN FAVEUR DES ENFANTS  
ET DES JEUNES

Mrs. Chambers moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 165, An Act to establish and provide for the office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth /  
Projet de loi 165, Loi visant à créer la charge  
d'intervenant provincial en faveur des enfants et des  
jeunes et à y pourvoir.

**Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on Bill 165, An Act to establish and provide for the office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, for its third reading in this House.

If passed, this legislation will be a significant step forward in providing better protection for Ontario's children and youth. At present, the Office of Child and Family Service Advocacy receives more than 3,000 calls every year. These calls come from some of our most vulnerable children and youth. These children and youth deserve to be heard by someone who can advocate on their behalf.

That is what this legislation is all about. It is a fulfillment of a commitment our government made to these children and youth while in opposition. We wanted a child advocate for Ontario who would speak for children and youth who may be unable to bring their issues forward on their own behalf. We wanted to help ensure that no government would be able to suppress the voice of the child advocate. We wanted the rights of our children and youth to never have to be subject to political interference. We wanted a child advocate who would be an independent officer of the Legislature, as independent as Ontario's Auditor General and the Ombudsman, to speak on behalf of our children. We wanted this independent child and youth advocate to report to the Legislative Assembly. We wanted the appointment of the child advocate to take place through an all-party legislative committee.

The proposed legislation will meet these commitments. The independent child advocate would provide a caring voice for a range of children and youth who are seeking or receiving services. She or he would speak for young people who are seeking or receiving services in the youth justice system, in the children's mental health or complex-special-needs systems, in the child protection and well-being system, and in provincial and demonstration schools for the deaf, blind, deaf-blind and learning disabled.

We have taken a number of steps to strengthen this legislation since we last presented it to the House. I would like to thank some of the people who have made

our work possible. Moving this proposed legislation forward would not have been possible without Ontario's current child advocate, Judy Finlay, who is in the gallery with us today. For the past 16 years, Judy Finlay has listened to the fears, concerns and wishes of Ontario's children and youth. She has helped deepen my own understanding of the significant challenges that some of Ontario's children and youth face every day. The advocate has also provided invaluable advice to our government in the drafting and strengthening of this legislation.

Judy Finlay was the first individual to appear before the standing committee during public hearings and was instrumental in setting up consultations with children and youth, inspiring them to share their stories, their concerns and their advice with the committee.

Our efforts to strengthen this vital legislation have been guided by input from several deputants who appeared or made submissions during the standing committee's public hearings on Bill 165.

I would like to thank all those individuals, some of whom are here with us today, who took the time to share their advice and their experiences during the public hearings for this legislation.

I would also like to thank the two opposition critics for children and youth, the member for Hamilton East and the member for Nepean-Carleton, for their work in strengthening this bill.

Our government has listened. We have brought forward substantive amendments in response to important issues that were raised during debate and public hearings. We also accepted opposition amendments that further support the intent of this legislation, which is to give our children and youth the voice they deserve.

At this time, I would like to go through some of the amendments. I will also explain how the original legislation in fact already addressed some concerns. We heard that we could improve Bill 165 by including purpose and principles statements at the outset of the legislation. These statements would provide Ontario's children and youth with a plain-language description of the work and role of the advocate. We agree. Bill 165 now includes a purpose statement and a principles statement that sum up in plain language the main functions and goals of the independent advocate. These refer to the principles expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in interpreting and applying the act. They also refer to the advocate's role of providing an independent voice for children and youth, including First Nations children and youth and children with special needs.

The substance of these statements was developed in consultation with the current advocate and a group of children and youth with whom she works. We heard from some, including the opposition, that the legislation had stipulations that could potentially have compromised the perception of the advocate's independence. We listened to these concerns and amended the legislation accordingly.

We have removed the requirement of the advocate to consult the minister or administrative head before form-



ing a final opinion. We have also removed the requirement for the advocate to provide the government with a copy of special or annual reports at least 30 days in advance.

The process of appointing the advocate also received some attention during debate on this legislation.

Our government's commitment has always been to a selection process by an all-party committee of the Legislative Assembly, as is the case for other independent officers of the Legislature. The language in the legislation is based on the advice of the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and is consistent with the language found in legislation for other independent officers of this Legislature.

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The operational practice of the assembly remains. Independent officers of the Legislature, such as a new independent child advocate, are selected by an all-party legislative committee.

During debate and public hearings, a number of concerns were also raised about which groups of children and youth would be included within the new independent advocate's scope. It has always been our government's intent to enable the independent advocate to provide advocacy services to the same groups served today by the current advocate. We have enshrined this intent in the legislation by introducing amendments to include children and youth attending provincial and demonstration schools for the deaf, blind, deaf-blind and severely learning disabled. We have done the same for youth in court holding cells and youth who are being transported to and from holding cells.

We were asked by some to add provisions specifying that the advocate is to provide services to youth in community supervision programs such as young people on probation under the Youth Criminal Justice Act. I am pleased to confirm that under the original legislation, these youth would continue to receive services.

I am also pleased to confirm that youth who have left formal care but are receiving approved services are covered by the legislation. They would continue to receive services from the independent advocate.

We recognize that the independent advocate needs to be able to have the means by which to access children and youth and their records in order to provide appropriate advocacy for these and other children and youth.

In addition, we heard from many that the children and youth whom the advocate serves must be aware of the existence of the advocate and also must be afforded the means by which to contact the advocate privately and without delay. Bill 165 now includes a subsection that speaks to the concerns around means and also speaks to the onus on the service providers and agencies to provide the advocate with access to children and youth who wish to meet with him or her privately and without unreasonable delay.

During public hearings, we heard some concerns that the requirement for the advocate to provide advance notice to service providers of a planned visit could lead

to unintended consequences, such as preventing the advocate from having a true impression of the children's normal environment. We agree. That requirement no longer exists in Bill 165.

We have also included an amendment that places a duty on agencies and service providers to provide the advocate with access to children and youth during systemic reviews.

We carefully drafted the access-to-records provisions of the legislation in consultation with the Information and Privacy Commissioner to ensure that the privacy and other legal rights of the child are protected. The legislation provides the advocate with access to a child or youth's private records, provided that the child or youth provides consent. The discretion to determine the child or youth's capacity to provide consent rests with the advocate.

I would also like to take this opportunity to address a scenario where an adult may wish to bring forward a complaint on behalf of a child or youth who is unable to do so. The legislation intentionally supports a partnership between the advocate and the children and youth he or she serves.

While the work of an independent advocate would be driven by the voices of children and youth, this legislation does provide the advocate with the power to conduct a review on his or her own initiative. The advocate could, for example, review a complaint brought forward on behalf of a child or youth. The advocate would also have the discretion to follow up privately with a child or youth who has withdrawn a complaint.

I would now like to address another issue which some deputants called for during the public hearings: the issue of investigative powers. An advocate with investigative powers would have to be neutral when conducting an investigation, but as the current advocate, who opposes investigative powers, explains, the advocate is not neutral. The advocate is charged to speak on behalf of children and youth.

During public hearings, a number of First Nations leaders and service providers spoke in support of a deputy advocate for First Nations children and youth. As Minister of Children and Youth Services, I have spent a great deal of time listening to the concerns of First Nations people. These individuals are concerned by the disproportionate representation of First Nations children and youth in our child protection and youth justice systems. They speak of their ongoing commitment to maintaining cultural ties and traditions among the younger generation.

Last summer, I had the opportunity to travel with the current advocate to five remote First Nations reserves in northern Ontario. It was an experience that I will not forget. The current advocate has done tremendous work in supporting our First Nations children and youth. We support the idea of a deputy advocate to see that this work continues; however, we also believe that the new independent advocate should have the discretion to create such a position. Our government was therefore pleased to



support a motion brought forward by the official opposition that enables the advocate to appoint deputies if he or she chooses, including a deputy for aboriginal children and youth.

In addition, the current legislation provides the advocate with the power to strike committees as he or she sees fit. We support the advocate's abilities to strike committees, but do not wish to be overly prescriptive, thereby limiting the independent advocate's discretion to do so.

We were also pleased to support an amendment brought forward by the third party requiring the advocate to have significant experience in areas such as children's mental health, child welfare, developmental services, youth justice education and pediatric health services. The children and youth of our province will be well-served by an independent advocate well-versed in children's issues.

I am privileged to have this exceptional opportunity to demonstrate our government's support for Ontario's most vulnerable children and youth. If passed, we are committed to moving quickly to proclaim and implement this legislation. I know we can work together to make sure that no government, current or future, will be able to suppress the voices of our children, voices that can be amplified through the voice of the child advocate. I call on all members of the House today to join me in supporting this groundbreaking, historic legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Milloy):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I appreciate the minister's overview of some of the changes that were made to Bill 165, from the initial draft of the bill to where we ended up today, with a third reading bill that has substantially changed—although, in my opinion, still needs some fine-tuning, if you want to call it that. Nonetheless, I will be having an opportunity very shortly to provide some comments on not only what I think was done right in terms of amendments to this bill, but things that I still have concerns about that remain outstanding. I'm not going to get into any of the details of that at this point in time, except to say that I think the minister appropriately mentioned some of the real concerns that had been raised by the critics and others after that second reading debate, and we saw many amendments come during clause-by-clause. I know there are stakeholders today who are still concerned that further amendments weren't accepted, but that's the cut and thrust of what happens in committee. I look forward to talking in a little more detail in 20 minutes or so about what my concerns are with the bill.

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Having said that, it was an extremely challenging process for us to go through the public hearings portion of committee, with the knowledge that the work had not been done in advance, particularly with the young people of this province. I'll mention that again a little later on. It was a missed opportunity where there could have been a full engagement of young people in the province of Ontario, particularly those who are affected by this bill, to really participate in its crafting. Unfortunately, the

government didn't see fit to do that, and that is a loss that we will never gain back.

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship):** Actually, I heard the minister talking about this bill and how she has accommodated most of the concerns of both parties of the opposition. This, in my view, is a very historic bill. It will actually protect the rights of our children.

The minister also talked about the powers that this advocate general will have and how independent this advocate general will be, like the Auditor General in Ontario. I think that is what is required, because then you will not be able to suppress the voices of the children. That has been missing for a very long time, and that's exactly what the minister is providing.

She's also making accommodation to the other things, like appointing the deputy advocate general, if that is required, or expanding the committees if that is required, but she is leaving that up to the advocate general so that he can have some participation in order to serve the children. The whole purpose here is how we serve the children of our province and that they are not subjected to mishandling of any kind.

What we are doing with this legislation is, we have strengthened this legislation through the committee process, as the minister pointed out before. We have included a purpose-and-principle statement that speaks to children and youth, and that was drafted in consultation with the current advocate and a group of children and youth that she serves.

We removed the requirement for the advocate to provide a copy of his or her special report 30 days in advance of the report. I think these are the advancements in the legislation which will serve our children quite well as we move forward in this province.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** I'm pleased to support this legislation as it's finally come before the House. The Progressive Conservative Party is proud to have been the first to introduce a child advocate in Ontario, under the premiership of Bill Davis. Those were great days in Ontario.

The McGuinty Liberals have been dithering and delaying on the children and youth file and, quite frankly, it's been a long time coming and it's quite unacceptable. The Liberals made a promise in 2003, and then they stalled by commissioning private consultants to undertake a review. Almost two years after the initial promise, the Liberals stated that legislation was imminent, and that imminent legislation from there took almost 20 months—almost two years for imminent legislation to be introduced in this House. It took more than three years, after the initial promise, for them to follow through. That's a long time.

Children in this province have not been well served during that time. In the province of Ontario they've suffered under the Liberals' ineffective and unfocused government, as revealed last December, when the Auditor General's review of children's aid societies in Ontario found this government and its management



wanting. I would suggest that children in Ontario deserve better and more timely advice and support and protection than this government has been able to afford them.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** I appreciate the opportunity to support the minister in her very, very hard work with children in our province. Contrary to what was just said, first of all, that this is an empty glass, I prefer to see it as a full glass in terms of dealing with our children. If that's support, I sure as heck would not want to hear non-support.

Anyway, let me focus specifically on what's being talked about tonight. I think what we're talking about is that there isn't one person in this place who does not want our children protected. Let's get that on the record and put that to bed. There isn't anyone that has a monopoly on how children are treated. There isn't anyone in this place or outside of this province that has a monopoly on what the best ideas or the worst ideas are.

I want to support the minister on this simply because it's the right thing to do. A bill—and I keep saying this in this place—a single bill does not have all the answers. There are amendments to bills, there are bill modifications, there are removals of bills. If anyone thinks that anybody in this place, in all parties, can write the perfect bill, show me. Let's be real; let's be honest. We're talking about an evolution and a fluid motion forward for the protection of the people of Ontario and, in this case, specifically our children.

I want to go on record as saying to our stakeholders and to the people who have dedicated their lives—and I say this sincerely—to protecting and caring for children, thank you very much. It's an important point that we sometimes miss. We sometimes miss that there's an awful lot of people out there—specifically the parents, contrary to what some people try to portray parents as, and all of the other stakeholders—who have a passion for ensuring our children are safe and secure. I thank the minister for bringing this legislation forward—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. The minister has two minutes to respond.

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** I would like to use these two minutes, actually, to recognize some of the people who are with us here today. We have the advocate, Judy Finlay, and a couple people from her office—well, at least one from her office: Ashraf Shah. Not here? I really should say that any suggestion that children have not been well served over the past almost four years is really very, very unfortunate, and maybe just a matter of ignorance, because we have a fantastic advocate and advocate's office right now.

I would also like to recognize representatives from Voices for Children: Irwin Elman—is Irwin here? Oh, there's Irwin; it's good to see you—Stephanie Ma and Kathy Vine. From the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies: Adam Diamond—where's Adam? It's good to see you, Adam—Amanda Rose, Virginia Rowden and Sophia Kolaroff. From Defence for Children International, which made a substantial submission on behalf of children and youth in this province, we have

Agnes Samler and Matthew Geigen-Miller. And there have been others who have come from time to time.

I want to thank you for your work on this. You are wonderful partners to have. I hope you realize that this is in fact legacy work that you have done. I'm very pleased to have the opportunity and the privilege to work with partners like these who care so much about children and youth.

## ROYAL ASSENT

### SANCTION ROYALE

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. John Milloy):** I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in his office.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** The following are the titles of the bills to which His Honour did assent:

Bill 69, An Act to allow for information sharing about regulated organizations to improve efficiency in the administration and enforcement of regulatory legislation and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 69, Loi permettant l'échange de renseignements sur les organismes réglementés afin de rendre plus efficaces l'application et l'exécution de la législation de nature réglementaire et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

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Bill 103, An Act to establish an Independent Police Review Director and create a new public complaints process by amending the Police Services Act / *Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à créer le poste de directeur indépendant d'examen de la police et à créer une nouvelle procédure de traitement des plaintes du public en modifiant la Loi sur les services policiers.*

Bill 184, An Act to protect species at risk and to make related changes to other Acts / *Projet de loi 184, Loi visant à protéger les espèces en péril et à apporter des modifications connexes à d'autres lois.*

Bill 187, An Act respecting Budget measures, interim appropriations and other matters / *Projet de loi 187, Loi concernant les mesures budgétaires, l'affectation anticipée de crédits et d'autres questions.*

## PROVINCIAL ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACT, 2007 (CONTINUED)

### LOI DE 2007 SUR L'INTERVENANT PROVINCIAL EN FAVEUR DES ENFANTS ET DES JEUNES (SUITE)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** It's a privilege for me to be able to participate in this the third reading of Bill 165, which basically is a bill that is going



to create an independent officer of the Legislature responsible for providing advocacy services to children and youth who are—Mr. Speaker, I need to get unanimous consent to defer our critic's leadoff speech on this bill.

**The Acting Speaker:** Madam Witmer has asked for unanimous consent to defer the lead. Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** It's only because Madam Witmer is asking for it, though.

**Mrs. Witmer:** Thank you very much. I appreciate that. Our critic will take her rightful place. Anyway, as I say, I am pleased to participate in this third reading debate of Bill 165. I'm also very pleased to say that our party will be supporting the bill as it has been amended by the standing committee on justice policy. We will move forward from there.

I think this is an issue that people in this province and people in this House take very seriously. I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to all the individuals who have worked hard, have listened to the concerns that have been expressed and have brought us to a point where the bill is today going into the final and the third reading. I think people in the House and throughout the province all have a genuine desire to make sure that children and youth in this province certainly are protected and everything is done in order to make sure that their rights are protected.

We have had an opportunity, and I want to congratulate our critic, the member for Nepean—Carleton, Lisa MacLeod. She has been a very passionate advocate on behalf of children since she was elected in a by-election. She has engaged in consultations herself on this legislation, and I know that as a result of her very hard work, she was able to persuade and convince the Liberal government to make some very substantial changes to the bill in order to ensure that it would protect Ontario's most vulnerable children. So I do want to congratulate my colleague for her hard work.

Now, Cathy Vine, the executive director of Voice for Children, has pointed out that "Ontario's most vulnerable children and youth—approximately 25,000 in government care through children's aid societies, in mental health systems, in residential schools for the hearing or visually impaired, in detention or police custody or other settings—depend on a system that too often fails them utterly." I guess this bill is all about doing the right thing for those children.

We believe that certainly we in this House have a duty of protection, and it is important to establish this new office of the child and youth advocate. Our record as Progressive Conservatives regarding the child advocate is a long one and a proud one. It was our Premier, Bill Davis, in 1984 who introduced the child advocate in the province of Ontario. Premier Davis established the interministerial provincial advisory committee in 1977 by which we are now able to have ministries work across

boundaries to provide a forum for agencies and families to enable better access for children. It was in 1978 that Premier Davis established Canada's first provincial advocacy office, the Office of Child and Family Services Advocacy, which was later entrenched in legislation when Mr. Davis's government introduced the Child and Family Services Act. Premier Davis was the first in this province to envision a government body which would bring together expertise in the areas of child welfare, children's mental health, developmental disability, youth justice, education, health, family treatment and children's rights in order to best serve Ontario's children. It is because of the vision and the leadership of former Premier William Davis that Ontario's child advocate became a model for governments across this country.

I am always pleased to hearken back to the leadership provided by Premier Davis, because I can remember as a teacher in the province of Ontario the very, very sincere commitment, the passionate commitment that he did have to children in Ontario. I know that our current leader, John Tory, worked very closely with Mr. Davis in many of the areas that I have just spoken about.

Bill 165 would create, when it's passed, an independent officer of the Legislature responsible for providing advocacy services to children and youth who are seeking or receiving services under the Child and Family Services Act. This bill repeals certain provisions of the CFSA and makes consequential amendments to that act. I am very pleased in my community at the work that is undertaken by children and family services. I know that the changes that are being made here will certainly be well-received by our community. Particularly, Bill 165 establishes the position of Provincial Advocate For Children And Youth. The appointed advocate is an officer of the Legislative Assembly, and the functions of the advocate are to:

"(a) provide advocacy to children and youth who are seeking or receiving approved services under the Child and Family Services Act;

"(b) provide advocacy to young persons who are being dealt with under the Ministry of Correctional Services Act;

"(c) promote the rights under part V of the Child and Family Services Act of children in care and the rights under part V of the Ministry of Correctional Services Act of young persons in custody;...

"(d) provide any other advocacy that is permitted under the regulations or any other act."

I know that one of the concerns that our party has had is about the long time period involved in finally bringing this legislation forward. It was first in July 2003 that the Liberal government issued a press release promising that they would pass legislation creating an independent office of the child advocate that would report to the Legislature rather than the government. After that time, in July 2003, there was research done to study the Child and Family Services Act and to develop recommendations. I know that the review was delivered to the Minister of Children and Youth Services in 2004. During



that time period—and I think you can see it's almost four years since the promise was made that we're now at a place in May, as I say, four years later, finally where we're seeing the government move forward with the creation of this independent child advocate.

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One of the things that unfortunately happened during this long period of time is that I know there were colleagues in this House who were disappointed that they weren't involved in consultations or in preparation of the report. This report didn't come forward in 2004 or 2005 or 2006. In fact, it is more recently that, finally, this report from 2004 has seen the light of day, and the government has now moved forward with the legislation. I know that was some of the concern that we did hear: the long period of time—almost four years—that it has taken us to get where we are today. The other concern that was expressed was the lack of opportunity for consultation with those people who obviously had an interest in being involved in a bill and in these children whom we obviously want to protect.

Our party also had some concerns with Bill 165 as we went into the public hearings. As I say, we were pleased with the bill. We do believe it addressed some key issues that were lacking in the current system. But we did still have concerns and questions, and that's why we were pleased that the public hearings did take place and that the public had an opportunity for further input.

Some of the concerns we had going into the public hearings that I just want to reiterate at this time are as follows:

(1) The lack of consultation, not just with those MPPs in this House, but also with certain stakeholders.

(2) Some concern originally that the bill didn't have investigative powers or the ability to summon witnesses or to summon evidence, and that it had no ability to review child deaths.

(3) A concern about children's access to the advocate not being guaranteed, and entrance to facilities by the advocate being restricted.

(4) That although the scope and mandate of this office is broad, the bill still manages to leave out two groups that are presently protected by the current office of the children's advocate.

So those were some of the concerns that our party had coming into the public hearings. I know that it was the public hearings and the public input—and they were important—that allowed our critic, my colleague from Nepean–Carleton, Lisa MacLeod, to do some excellent work in bringing forward amendments that addressed the concerns of those who made representation. I believe that, to a certain degree through her efforts, and certainly the efforts of those who appeared before the committee, many of the very serious concerns and reservations of the bill have been corrected. I guess this speaks for the need, when you're introducing a bill, to as soon as possible have consultations with stakeholders and with your colleagues in the House. I think that's important.

Our member from Nepean–Carleton was, as she always is, persistent, and she was firm. The child advo-

cate now is going to have the ability to appoint deputies. Why is this important? It's important for the children at risk who live outside of the city of Toronto, or it's important for those children who live in the aboriginal communities. In fact, it was my colleague the member for Nepean–Carleton who garnered support from all sides in this House—and I appreciate the co-operation—to send this bill back to committee for just this reason, and that is to make sure that we had those deputies in place in order that the needs of all the children living in this province, particularly those outside of Toronto, could be addressed. This change to the bill was absolutely necessary. It was recommended to the members of the committee on justice policy by the Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law. This change was required because there are areas of the province which may require special attention by the provincial advocate in respect to the most vulnerable children in the province. It was their belief and our belief that the advocate should have the ability to appoint deputies to focus on the areas where we have some very, very extraordinary needs.

In addition to this change, the appointment of deputies, we are pleased that the bill was sent back to committee in order to include an amendment that empowers the child advocate with the ability to enter the premises of an agency or a service provider in order to speak with the child. We still have some concerns about the bill, but we are pleased that that change has been made.

I want to just go back to the lack of consultation because we have heard there were groups who didn't have an opportunity to be consulted and they wanted to help.

In fact, let me read an excerpt from the Child Advocacy Renewal report written by Defence for Children International in 2006 on the Liberal government's process of consultations. Again, they express in here, "The Ontario government does not appear to have conducted any other major consultation on research projects regarding its commitment to strengthen child advocacy." For whatever reason—I haven't been that closely involved with this legislation—it does appear that that has been a concern.

One of the other components missing from this bill currently, despite the fact that we have seen some great amendments added by the government which are very much appreciated, is that there is still a desire on the part of many that the bill should have included a children's bill of rights, clearly demonstrating what rights a child in Ontario is entitled to, such as the stipulation of the degree of access a child would have to the new child advocate. There is still concern surrounding the fact this new legislation has no provision to guarantee that children have access to the advocate. Children, under the mandate of the advocate, do not have the right, currently, to have a private conversation with the advocate's office. They do not even have a right to know about the existence of the advocate.

Michael Cochrane, a lawyer from Toronto who practises civil litigation with an emphasis on family law,



I understand, made a very good case to the standing committee on justice policy as to why a children's bill of rights would be beneficial. I just want to read his remarks into the record. He says:

"Over the last few years, I've been involved in dealing with some of the human wreckage that comes about from perhaps not having something like a children's advocate in place. In particular, I was involved with several hundred students who went to the schools for the deaf in Ontario. I don't know if any of you are aware of it, but the Ontario government paid out about \$8 million in compensation to deaf students who were physically and sexually abused in the schools for the deaf. I was also involved with the claims against the Robarts School in London, Ontario—again, deaf children sexually abused by teachers.

"Another project I was involved with that seems completely unrelated to those things, but you'll see in a moment why it is related—I was the chair of the task force in Ontario that designed the Environmental Bill of Rights. One of the things that was built into the Environmental Bill of Rights was the Environmental Commissioner's office. I would urge you to look to the Environmental Commissioner's office as a model for the way in which the children's advocate is structured. The Environmental Commissioner is the linchpin for the way in which the Environmental Bill of Rights is implemented in Ontario. That office ... right now watches over the way in which environmental rights are protected and has acted very much like a pitchfork in the rear ends of government and other people who would abuse Ontario's natural environment.

"I mention those only because, if it were up to me, the children's advocate office would be a part of a children's bill of rights for Ontario and the office would be watching over the implementation of that bill of rights.... Right now, citizens in this province are better equipped to act to protect the environment than they are to protect children."

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That is the end of his quote, and I think that speaks to the issue itself of the need for a children's bill of rights.

Currently, the child advocate takes over 3,000 calls each year from children at risk and others who are in need of advocacy. The majority of the calls are about standards of practice for children living in residential care, peer-on-peer violence, children living at home with special needs, and aboriginal child welfare.

In conclusion, we still support the idea of a children's bill of rights in order to protect Ontario's most vulnerable children. But, having said that, I am pleased that there were public hearings. I appreciate the input of all those individuals who are so concerned about vulnerable children. I certainly appreciate the minister listening to the concerns brought forward by our critic. As I say, we will be supporting this legislation.

**The Acting Speaker:** It's time for questions and comments. The Chair recognizes the member from Hamilton East.

**Ms. Horwath:** I just want to congratulate the member for her comments on the bill. It's kind of difficult to be the first person to speak in a debate if you're not the critic, and that's why we often like our critics to go first. But the member did an admirable job, I think, in laying out the role that her critic, the member for Ottawa-Nepean, played as the other critic for this bill. I think she appropriately gave credit where credit was due in terms of the work that was done and also outlined some of the issues that were problematic, some of the issues that were fixed, and some of the issues that remain problematic. Of course, I look forward to following in that vein myself in a very few short minutes.

I think it's positive that the opposition is supporting this bill, notwithstanding its flaws. I think that shows that the people, around this place anyway, would agree on one thing for sure, and that is that the time for an independent office for the child and youth advocate in the province of Ontario is long overdue. Notwithstanding the fact that there are some problems that remain, the fact of the matter is it's no longer appropriate to delay getting that office to be independent. I would expect that in the independent office we will see some real activity, engaging young people in bringing forward suggestions and recommendations for positive change that we will be expected to, I'm sure, look at as the future rolls out and we determine whether or not the bill we're going to pass today is going to meet the needs of children and youth in Ontario. But it certainly is, I think, a start. That's what the member reflected in her remarks, and certainly that's what we heard from stakeholders after the clause-by-clause debate.

I look forward to putting my remarks on the record very shortly.

**The Acting Speaker:** The Chair recognizes the member from Scarborough Southwest.

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I am glad to see you in the chair again, knowing the good work you did last week in mentioning Mother's Day. I did forget to mention my mother-in-law, which got me into some trouble. So I will mention a belated happy Mother's Day to my mother-in-law, to keep her happy and my family happy as well.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Berardinetti:** Yes, that's right, Mr. Duguid.

Very briefly, I had the opportunity to sit on this committee as well, and I just wanted to say a few short things. First of all, the members of the committee did, I think, a really good job of canvassing and covering and asking questions of the deputants. We had a lot of younger deputants who came, who flew in from around the province. We had a very good set of presentations. The government members as well as the representative from the NDP, Ms. Horwath, and the representative from the Conservative Party, whose name just slips me for a moment—Christine Elliott—did an excellent job. All of them did, in asking questions. As Chair, I had the opportunity to have a little bit of latitude at least, because some of these kids had flown in from northern parts of Ontario



and they made their concerns quite clear. The minister, as well, has to be congratulated, because she was listening. She's been on this debate from the very beginning. When changes were required, the minister brought them forward. So the key is that we now have in place a bill that, if passed, will ensure that no current or future government could interfere with the ability of the child advocate to speak on behalf of children and youth.

After hearing them speak and after seeing them do their presentations, I know there is a group of young people out there that one day could make an excellent group of politicians. They really advocated their points well, and were listened to. I congratulate them all for their excellent presentations once again.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** I'd like to congratulate the member from Kitchener–Waterloo on her great dissertation on this bill. As she pointed out, we are strongly supportive of this. It's perhaps somewhat overdue, but it's a bill that is needed to ensure that the most vulnerable—if you could imagine children in our society who are either in foster homes or in correctional services, and what their needs are, and how their needs so differ from perhaps other children in our society who are being raised in their homes by their parents. Those children have very, very special needs. I'm sure this child advocate who will be appointed will be a huge step forward in ensuring that those children receive the kinds of assistance they need.

Even though this bill took so long to come to the Legislature—it was announced, I guess, in March 2005 and it was said at the introduction of the legislation that they would introduce it that spring. Well, the spring came and the spring went and the fall session came and the fall session went. Then the next spring session came and the next spring session went. Then finally, in the fall, on November 30, 2006, after Minister Chambers had been appointed, Bill 165 was introduced, and the imminent timing was actually 21 months before the bill was introduced. It would have been wonderful to have that 21-month period, or at least some portion of it, available to do further consultations on this legislation to make it even better than it is today.

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** I am delighted to stand up in support of Bill 165. I want to begin by thanking Minister Chambers, who I'll have the opportunity to formally thank next October, because with the shifting of boundaries out in Scarborough, her boundary now has shifted past my house about 200 feet. Now I'll be outside of my own riding and I'll be able to ensure that I acknowledge all her good work by voting for her next October.

I want to thank her for her passionate advocacy for young people through this bill, which certainly provides that, but through a number of the other initiatives that she has worked so hard to provide to young people in my riding in Scarborough, across the city of Toronto and right across Ontario, when it comes to providing young people with job opportunities, with summer job opportunities and ensuring that our challenge fund is being utilized in the best possible way to provide outreach

opportunities as well for our young people. So I want to thank her for all her good work.

Our young people do need advocates. This is a part of our population that, while I think they're very capable of speaking for themselves, in past history it's been an area of the population that sometimes has been ignored. I think it's incumbent on all three parties, not only here today but in our ongoing efforts here in this place, to listen to the voice of our young people.

I've had the opportunity to do that on two recent occasions. In this two-minute session I won't have the opportunity to speak in detail about it, but I had the opportunity to host a youth Parliament in my area at the Scarborough Civic Centre with Woburn Collegiate and Cedarbrae Collegiate. I've got to tell you that the quality of debate among these young people, the level of knowledge, was absolutely awesome. These young people know what they're talking about. They're not only great leaders for our future; they're great leaders for the present. We should listen to what they have to say and we should act on it.

1630

**The Acting Speaker:** It's time for a reply. The Chair recognizes the member from Kitchener–Waterloo.

**Mrs. Witmer:** I appreciate the participation in this debate of the member for Hamilton East, who I know has always been a very passionate advocate for our children and youth. I know that we all look forward to hearing her comments in the future. I appreciate the comments of the member for Scarborough Southwest, those of the member for Scarborough Centre and of course my own colleague the member for Halton.

I think what we've heard today is that no matter where you sit in this House and no matter which party you represent, there is a passionate commitment to children in Ontario. There is support to make this advocate an independent officer who is going to report directly to the Legislature.

Recently I've had the opportunity to be involved in a conversation with someone who has been involved with children in a country in another part of the world. We are very fortunate that all of us here are so committed and so dedicated to making sure that our children have access to this advocate who is going to be there to protect them no matter what the situation will be.

I think this is a good day for this House. I want to congratulate everybody who has worked so very hard. Yes, maybe it did take the four years—sometimes it takes a little bit longer than we want—but at least before the election this bill will have passed, and it will be the children and our youth in this province who will be the beneficiaries. Congratulations to everyone who's worked so hard to make this a reality.

**The Acting Speaker:** Time for further debate.

**Ms. Horwath:** I'd like to start out by asking for unanimous consent. I've had recent surgery on my foot and it's very sore. I'm going to do my entire one hour standing up, but if there comes a time when I need to sit down, I would ask members to allow me to finish my speech sitting if it's necessary.



**The Acting Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent? It's agreed.

**Ms. Horwath:** I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker. Now my colleague is back and I've taken all his space and I apologize for that. My friend from Trinity-Spadina has come to join me.

I want to start out by saying to the government and to the minister that, through the committee hearings and clause-by-clause debate of Bill 165, An Act to establish and provide for the office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, this bill went from being what I thought was a bit of a disaster—in fact, the original bill I think was a bit of a sham, actually kind of an embarrassment—to something, after the clause-by-clause, after the public hearings, after the work that was done even on the second attempt at clause-by-clause, that at the very least is considered to be a step in the right direction by the stakeholders who have participated in getting us this far.

In fact, members of this chamber might recall that second reading of Bill 165, perhaps in its original text at that time, in my opinion anyway, could have been described as somewhat of a smokescreen. I say that because you might recall that there was a controversy swirling around this place during the time this bill was brought forward. You may recall that portions of the Auditor General's December 6, 2006, report had been leaked around the time that this bill came forward. Chapter 3 in particular was a damning review of a lack of accountability of children's aid societies in this province. So what was happening was that there was a report that was leaked. There was a lot of negative media attention on the minister. This bill, as has been mentioned already by the opposition—we were waiting with bated breath for the bill to finally at some point be tabled in this Legislature, but it was in the context of this other controversy that we finally got to see a bill come forward dealing with the independence of the child advocate. I raise that because it was an interesting study in what can go on around here in terms of how governments deflect criticism on important issues.

This report was leaked about a week before the official tabling of the report by the Auditor General for the province of Ontario. In the report there was a significant criticism of lack of accountability in terms of financial and reporting measures with the children's aid societies and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. The information, as I mentioned, started to leak out about a week before the actual report. So around November 27 we started to see some media scrums and some pretty heavy-duty questioning of the minister, both from media and from critics in this House. The heat was on the minister, absolutely, to come up with the answers in that week prior to the official unveiling of the Auditor General's report. But interestingly enough, no matter how many questions were asked, the minister simply refused to respond to the report because it had not yet been officially tabled. So she had been asked many, many times, and many, many times she refused to answer. She simply declined to respond. She said, "No, I won't do it.

I'm not responding until next week when the official report of the auditor comes out."

Things really did start to get pretty hot around this place at that time. Reporters and citizens and critics—everybody—wanted answers from the minister about what was contained in that Auditor General's report. But instead of answers, the minister searched around desperately for a way to douse the flames of what was happening around here. So the Liberals reached into their bag of tricks and pulled out Bill 165, and what a shame that is. What a shame that that's why this finally came forward: to deflect the government from the criticisms around the Auditor General's report.

But let me stop to make two quick points about the Auditor General's report on the children's aid societies. The first one is that it was actually a value-for-money report. What happened is that the Auditor General reviewed basically what the expenditure patterns were of some—not all—of the province's children's aid societies. In fact, it's interesting, because as André Marin, our Ombudsman, stated at the time, the Auditor General's report really is just a value-for-money—I shouldn't say "just," but it's a value-for-money kind of review. So it doesn't really dig into some of the systemic issues that could perhaps be unveiled by someone like an Ombudsman. In fact, our Ombudsman said something to the effect that it provides an opportunity to count paper clips and determine if dollars are being wasted, which of course was found to be the fact, and even to outline problems with the lines of authority or approval or accountability that might or might not exist, which of course was also found to be the situation in some—not all; in some—of the cases with the children's aid societies that were reviewed. Again, not all were, but some were.

What the Auditor General's report couldn't do, what it doesn't do and what it can never do is deal with the quality of services, the efficacy of the work that's being done, for example, in the children's aid societies. The reason I raise this issue in the context of this bill is because the insights into the systems themselves, the systems like children's aid, for example, could not be reviewed or looked at by the Auditor General. In fact, the person who can do that kind of work, the person who can look at the systemic issues and the problems of an organization like a children's aid society, should really be the Ombudsman of Ontario. But we know that the Ombudsman in Ontario has not got the power to do those kinds of reviews on child welfare issues, child protection issues. He simply does not have the ability to look into children's aid societies particularly in the province of Ontario. He is not allowed to investigate these matters. So a system whose flaws, unfortunately, have led to unthinkable abuse and tragedy for some of Ontario's most vulnerable children. I think of children like Jeffrey Baldwin, like Jay, who was overmedicated significantly while under the care of the children's aid society, and like Randall Dewley. I raise this now, in the beginning of my remarks on Bill 165, because even the current child



advocate believes, as does the Ombudsman, as do stakeholders, as does the NDP caucus, that Bill 165 is only half the answer.

**1640**

An independent child advocate needs to have the corollary support of the Ombudsman's office to truly ensure that our province's most vulnerable children are being properly cared for and served. I know that by raising this issue, it raised the ire of the minister, and I can understand why. It's all too coincidental, the way things unfolded in this province when the bill was brought forward. I'm going to speak to that in more detail a little bit later on.

What I want to do right now is quote from the news release that the Ombudsman put out when Bill 165 was brought forward. After congratulating the minister, and rightly so, in bringing forward the bill, he goes on to say:

"Bill 165, the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act, takes only 'baby steps' toward an effective system of child protection," Mr. Marin says in his submissions to the standing committee on justice policy, which is holding hearings on the bill this week. The advocate may speak for children, but unlike an ombudsman, will have no investigative powers. 'An advocate is as much an ombudsman as an apple is an orange.'

"Yet Ontario's Ombudsman is unable to investigate the hundreds of complaints to his office about children's aid societies each year (more than 600 in 2006-07) because they remain outside of his jurisdiction. Cases that should be investigated are effectively thrown away. Mr. Marin says: 'Despite all the government's rhetoric that "children are our future," we in Ontario are choosing to rid ourselves of hundreds of these serious allegations every year by taking a trip to the dumpster and looking the other way.' Ontario is the only province in Canada where children's aid societies escape such scrutiny, he notes. 'However you slice, chop or spin it, there is no contest as to which province finishes dead last in investigating children's complaints. Ontario does.'"

He goes on to suggest that in fact an amendment needs to be made to Bill 165 that would give the Ombudsman oversight for children's aid societies in the province of Ontario, just to bring us up to the same level of accountability for our most vulnerable children, as exists in every other province of this country. But did the government do that? No, they did not. When you look at the first draft of this bill, it is not in there. It is not in there to have the ombudsman's oversight of children's aid societies. It does not exist. So what did I do? Of course I brought the amendment forward to clause-by-clause. That's the process. When you see something missing in a bill, you bring an amendment, so I brought the amendment. It was amendment number 8, which said, on section 1.1 of the bill:

"I move that the bill be amended by adding the following section:

"Ombudsman

"1.1 Without detracting from the powers of the advocate under this act, the Ombudsman appointed under

the Ombudsman Act has full oversight over all services for children, including child welfare and youth justice."

Guess what happened, Mr. Speaker? You don't need to guess. All you need to do is look at the bill we're debating in front of us, the amended bill, to see that the government members, who of course have the majority by virtue of being the government, have voted down the amendment to have ombudsman oversight on children's aid, child welfare matters and youth justice matters. They voted it down.

It has become a bit of a pattern with this government. Interestingly enough I was listening to my colleague Shelley Martel recently discussing another bill, a health-related bill that she was the critic for. She had raised the issue of ombudsman oversight in another area, and that was the area of long-term care. There is no reason why the province of Ontario should not be a leader in terms of accountability, in terms of transparency, in terms of giving people an opportunity to have someone to go to when they're concerned about, when they want to complain about and when they're worried about the quality of services being provided by government in this province. We are at the back of the pack, and there's no reason for it, so at every chance and every opportunity, New Democrats are raising that issue in this Legislature. We're raising it with individual bills and we're even bringing some of our own bills. We bring amendments when we see it's necessary, like my colleague from the Nickel Belt riding brought the other day in regard to Bill 140, the long-term-care act. She brought one as well on Bill 171, another health care bill that she was dealing with, trying to get ombudsman oversight in the health sector. We know, in fact, that that has been in the news recently, the issue of ombudsman oversight in the health care sector, because we know very well that people have a very difficult time trying to navigate the health care system to find out how to get their issues resolved.

Similarly, my friend from the riding of Trinity-Spadina brought forward a private member's bill to try to get Ombudsman oversight in the school boards and in the education sector, recognizing that that's another system where, although we dedicate many, many dollars to it in terms of our budget, we have very little ability to dig into where the problems might be because there is no independent oversight measure.

I brought one of my own separate private member's bills on ombudsman oversight, and that was in the context of another bill from this minister, Bill 210. That was the bill on amendments to the Child and Family Services Act. When I brought that particular private member's bill forward, I brought it knowing that the minister wasn't going to be doing any amendments to Bill 210 either, and that's problematic. I have another private member's bill on the hospital sector as well.

So every time we try to raise how important it is to have Ombudsman oversight, it gets shot down by the government members, and I really don't know why. I really think the Ombudsman has a very important job to do in the province of Ontario. Certainly other provinces



see that job as important because they've given their Ombudsman the opportunity to review almost everything that's provided in terms of government services in these other provinces. Why can't Ontario do the same? Certainly at times it has been an embarrassment for the government, but if a little bit of embarrassment means that we have the kinds of services that we need and deserve in this province, then embarrassment it should be, and we should get on to the business of making sure that the services we provide the people of Ontario are appropriately delivered.

I'm going to say one last thing about the Auditor General's report, and it's this: I want to take the time to thank the Auditor General for tabling the report when he did, late last year. I really think that the minister was having a difficult time convincing the cabinet any time at all in the last few months leading up to the end of their mandate that they were going to be able to get this legislation tabled. I suspect that both the previous minister and the current minister had long been aware that the independent child advocate was simply not important enough to Dalton McGuinty and the powers that be around the cabinet table to bring it forward. This bill could have quite easily fallen off the table. This bill could have been quite easily one of the promises that the Liberals felt comfortable breaking. So I want to thank Mr. McCarter publicly, because I really do believe that if the minister wasn't so interested in deflecting his report, if the government didn't need to go searching into that bag of tricks for a smokescreen to take the sting out of that report, we wouldn't be here today at third reading debate.

Why do I say that? Again, I know that that offends the minister, but you just have to look at the track record of false starts and broken commitments around getting this initiative off the ground. The member from Kitchener-Waterloo made those remarks as well in her speech, as did some of the other Conservative members. The bottom line is, this independent office of the child advocate was promised in pre-election rhetoric back in 2003 before the election even took place. It took months and months and years and years to even have a bill tabled in this House at pretty much the 11th hour of this government and only in the context of this other report that was embarrassing the government. So I say to Mr. McCarter that I appreciate that he did bring that report forward, because it was that that gave the push to the government to say, "You have to do something positive on the children's file, and that means the child advocate bill has to come forward." I think that in some ways Mr. McCarter should be being thanked by the Minister of Children and Youth Services, and the previous one as well, because they were unable to put the push on to get this bill forward, and his work certainly did get it there.

Did we see anything from after the election until the end of December 2004? No, we didn't. Did we see anything from January, February? No. On March 8, 2005, we had the previous minister waxing eloquent about how there was a bill on its way, how it was coming

soon. She made all the announcements, but guess what? The bill never came. It didn't come all through to the end of that session. At the end of December 2005 we didn't see it, and in the spring of 2006 we didn't see it, and the fall of 2006 it still wasn't there. Finally, within a couple of days of the Auditor General's report, the bill got tabled. So that's where we are now.

**1650**

I think it's important to consider that the bill was tabled on November 30, 2006, and it was really a mere shell of a bill. If it wasn't such an important and serious issue in the province of Ontario, I would say that the bill that was tabled was almost a joke. I have heard through the grapevine that it didn't have to be so. I've heard that the minister's staff had been privy to detailed and comprehensive information, and probably even draft language, that could have formed the basis of a spectacular and cutting-edge piece of legislation for children and youth in this province. I've heard that many hundreds of hours had been invested by the very best minds to put together draft legislation—legislation that has never seen the light of day; language that has disappeared off the face of the earth, disappeared in the wake of a hasty reach of the minister's arm into a bag of tricks that pulled out a pathetic and weak bill that, frankly, shocked all of the dedicated people who had been working on these issues in our province for so long. People like Judy Finlay herself, people like Voices for Children, Defence for Children International, Youth Canada, Justice for Children and Youth and so many others were absolutely shocked to see the paltry excuse for a bill that this minister tabled in such haste back in November.

In fact, one only needs to review the many changes that were made. The bill itself is some 11 pages, I think, is how big this bill is. It's fairly short. Almost 80 amendments were tabled during clause-by-clause; 79 amendments were tabled during clause-by-clause. I have to say that that clause-by-clause was quite an interesting and somewhat bizarre process. Things didn't go as smoothly as they normally do when it comes to the committee hearings, clause-by-clause and then back for third reading.

I think what really happened is that in the rush to get Bill 165 here, it wasn't really reviewed in any great detail prior to the tabling of the actual bill. I submit that, notwithstanding the surgery performed on the bill during clause-by-clause, there are still some gaping wounds that need to be attended to when it comes to having an independent child advocate who is guaranteed all the resources and tools needed to do the job that youth deserve. I say this because what we ended up doing, in going through the clause-by-clause debate, is fixing up a lot of the problems.

I say to you that it's unfortunate, because it's not new information that came to the committee during clause-by-clause. In fact, it's information that had been long-standing knowledge, theoretically, anyway. My understanding is that that knowledge and information existed in the minister's office—in the ministry offices—for



quite some time. The thing that's problematic and disconcerting is that in their rush to get Bill 165 tabled, because they had taken so long to finally make it a priority, which they never did do on their own—they needed the push of the Auditor General, but that's fine. They got a push from the Auditor General, reached over and grabbed the bill and put it forward, but guess what? It wasn't a bill that had had any work done on it. It was probably some draft from 100 years ago that they pulled off a shelf somewhere and threw on the table, not realizing—"Oh gee, we forgot to put the most up-to-date bill in place." That's the only excuse I can think for it happening the way it did. I really do not believe that the minister would table a bill that had none, really, of the issues addressed that the stakeholders had been bringing forward that were so important.

I should probably take the time at this point to actually congratulate the government on having really listened during the public hearings first, and the clause-by-clause debate, and bringing forward some really important amendments to the bill. So at the end of the day, notwithstanding my criticisms about how we got here and where we are and the fact that the bill is not perfect, the minister does have to be congratulated for bringing forward amendments, some that I raised in debate, some that my friend from Trinity-Spadina raised in second reading debate, some that the member from Ottawa-Nepean raised during second reading debate and some of the amendments that were raised by the people who made presentations at the hearings. I do think it's appropriate to acknowledge and recognize that those amendments were brought.

I want to start with the very first one, which was an amendment that both myself and the other critic raised, which was the fact that the bill was silent on having any real purpose or principles or any outlining of what it was all about. The government did bring forward amendments—it's on, actually, the first page of the bill—outlining what the purpose of having an independent office of the child advocate is: What is the purpose of having this office? Then, a little later on, it goes on to talk about some of the principles to be applied.

I brought a motion forward that was some two and a half pages long that outlines those very issues. The member from the Conservative caucus, the critic for that caucus, brought forward amendments of that nature as well, and so did the government. The government's amendment was a little bit more streamlined, let's say, than the ones that I brought forward or the ones that the Conservative critic brought forward, but nonetheless, they're here. They're in the bill. There is actually a part of the bill that speaks to what the purpose is of having an independent child advocate, and I think that that's a positive thing. I really do believe that that's a positive thing.

They also brought forward some amendments that talk about specifically the principles that are to be applied. Here's where the government took the opportunity to include, in the language of the bill, a number of really

important issues that had been stated over and over again by stakeholders at committee. Those issues include having a very upfront, literal reference to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. That's in here. I congratulate the government for doing that, as well as having reference to, in those principles, a discussion about the provincial Advocate for Children And Youth "being an exemplar for meaningful participation of children and youth through all aspects of its advocacy services"—in other words, acknowledging in the language of the bill that the mandate of the office of the independent child advocate has always got to be informed by the very young people that it purports to represent or be a voice for. That's an extremely important amendment. I wasn't sure that that was going to get in there, but I have to congratulate the government on putting that in there. I think it's an extremely important principle, and I'm very pleased that they decided to put in an amendment that articulates that principle.

There are other things as well that the government approved in terms of amendments that I brought forward. One of the ones was specifically talking about that, when the next appointment comes forward for the new child advocate after the transitional period, there need to be certain commitments made in the legislation that that new advocate will have a certain history, if you will, or a certain resumé or curriculum vitae in terms of experience in various areas of work with children in the province of Ontario. That's in there too. I know that the member from Kitchener-Waterloo spoke about some of the amendments that were raised by her.

We went through the process of the hearings, and we had a number of amendments made. I could go on and on. There are several here that I had highlighted as ones that I saw as being positive, but every time I look at the clock I get worried that I'm going to run out of time because I'm only on page 2 of my 12-page speech. No, I'm just kidding.

Nonetheless, what I did find interesting was that, notwithstanding the clause-by-clause, where we went through a process of back-and-forthing around adding language that more appropriately reflected what we thought would be a bill that was meeting all the tests, if you will, of a good child advocate independent office, at the end of the day we came out of those clause-by-clause hearings and some of us were a little bit shell-shocked, I have to say, because it appeared that at the end of that day of clause-by-clause, there were some glaring problems with the bill that had been finalized that day. As it turns out, somehow the government was convinced that that in fact was the case, because after the bill had been ordered for third reading, it had to come out of that order for third reading. In fact, we had second reading debate on April 2. It was referred to committee on that same day. We did hearings on April 25 and April 26. On May 3, we did clause-by-clause. On May 3, it was then reported to the House and ordered for third reading. Then about a week later, on May 10, it was discharged from third reading and it was ordered back to the standing committee.



1700

That is apparently quite an unusual move. That, apparently, does not happen very often around here. Why did it happen in this case? I submit that it happened in this case because of the very issues that I was raising initially—that the minister didn't really want to hear—and that is that, notwithstanding the fact that it took a long time to get here, the bill that was actually tabled in this Legislature was so un-well-thought out, so inappropriate and so lacked any kind of consultation prior to the first draft being put forward, it was inevitable that after a rigorous clause-by-clause things got missed. The government simply didn't have its eye on the ball and wasn't very committed to making sure we had the best possible bill in front of us to go through clause by clause. So at the end of the day there were some glaring holes in the bill, some real problems. To this day, I still think there are some problems, and I'm going to get to them in a minute.

What happened on May 10 is that the bill got ordered back to the committee, we had another hastily organized committee meeting on May 14 and reconsidered the bill, had to go through all of the clauses again and finally did end up reporting the bill back on May 14. Here we are today in the final third reading debate of the bill.

Although the government cleared up some of the concerns in that clause-by-clause the first time around and, in fact, went back to the drawing board and did some more work afterwards, I really believe that the government really didn't do what they needed to do initially, and that's why we ended up in the embarrassing situation of having to go back to clause-by-clause. What they did was they cleared up a number of the issues that stakeholders had raised, a number of concerns had been dealt with, but I say that there are gaping wounds because, in fact, there are.

One of those wounds has already been discussed at some length and that's the issue of a lack of Ombudsman oversight. I've read the clause into the record that I had put forward as an amendment that did not get accepted by the government.

Also, there was another issue that had been raised by a number of stakeholders about the young people who would be able to receive service from the independent advocate. The minister, in her opening remarks, stated that all the children who currently receive services from the office of the advocate are going to continue to receive services from the office of the advocate. But something very disturbing came to light in clause-by-clause. It has to do with section 13 of the bill—I have it in front of me and so I'm going to read it out—which outlines, under the heading "Functions":

"The functions of the advocate are to provide advocacy to children"—it goes on, (a), (b), (c), and then section (c) is amended. The government put an amendment in. It says that the function is to:

"(c.1) provide advocacy in accordance with clause 14(1)(j.1) to children who are pupils of provincial schools for the deaf, schools for the blind, or demonstration schools under section 13 of the Education Act;" and

"(c.2) provide advocacy in accordance with clause 14(1)(j.2) to children and youth with respect to matters that arise while held in court holding cells and being transported to and from court holding cells."

These two issues were raised consistently, I might add, by the child advocate, by Voices for Children, by Defence for Children International, by Justice for Children and Youth. It was an issue that was contentious from the get-go, from the minute the bill was tabled in the House in its first reading form.

The government, as I was saying, put some positive amendments in. They heard that criticism and they put that amendment in to cover off children in these particular situations—schools for the deaf, schools for the blind, demonstration schools, children in custody—and I think that's a positive thing. But the rub comes when you look a little further on in the bill and you look at this clause 14(1)(j.1). When you go to subsection 14(1), which talks about the powers of the advocate, and you go to clause (j.1), it says that the advocate can "receive and respond to complaints from children who are pupils of provincial schools for the deaf, schools for the blind or demonstration schools under section 13 of the Education Act and use informal methods to resolve those complaints."

So what does that mean? That means that the government is putting in black and white right in the letter of this bill that those children who are in schools for the deaf, schools for the blind and demonstration schools under section 13 of the Education Act are not allowed to have the same level of advocacy service as other children who are outlined in this bill.

How can that be, Mr. Speaker? How can a government in the year 2007 bring forward legislation that literally discriminates against those children? I don't understand it. I was absolutely shocked when I followed along and found out that while the government, on the one hand—and the minister said it in her remarks—proudly says they're providing for those particular children in the bill, you just need to roll your eyes to the other side of the page, to the very next section, section 14, to find out that no, in fact, they're not, at least not at the same level as all other children in this province can expect. That is absolutely unacceptable. It's absolutely unbelievable that the bill actually states in black and white, in plain English, that deaf children and children who are blind are only allowed informal advocacy, as opposed to the full services of the office that all other children are privy to. How gross is that? How unbelievable that such a thing could be deliberately done in the province of Ontario in 2007, by a government, no less, that has been so studious about pretending to be committed to getting rid of barriers in this province for people with disabilities. They talk one talk and then they walk a different walk when it comes to actually putting things in place that make a difference for real people. Do you remember the number of that bill, the one getting rid of barriers for people with disabilities, where they say that over 20 years we're eventually going to maybe get to be a barrier-free



Ontario? For these kids, their barriers are being put right in the legislation. They're being told, "You have a barrier. You're not allowed to get the same level of service as other kids in this province," and that is something that is absolutely unbelievable.

In fact, we heard from people about this issue. We heard from Gary Malkowski from the Canadian Hearing Society and Chris Kenopic from ASL services for deaf children in Ontario. Do you know what they said? They came to our committee and told our committee that these demonstration schools and schools for the deaf, and also regular schools, need to have the child advocate services available to them. Mr. Malkowski went on to give a pretty passionate description of the particular vulnerability that deaf children have, specifically to sexual abuse, for example. He went on to describe how important it is, and he went on to describe in a very passionate way some of his own experiences as a deaf person in terms of vulnerability to abuse. And yet the government still does not see fit to provide the level of advocacy for those children in particular, and that is absolutely unacceptable. It's wrong and it deserves to be challenged.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that it likely will be challenged. I don't imagine that this bill will get very far after receiving royal assent and being in force before it's going to have a charter challenge. I can't see how it cannot have a charter challenge. I don't understand why a government would put forward a bill when we would know that it likely will get a charter challenge because it sets out a different level of service based on disability. That's just bizarre and backwards, and I don't understand it.

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I was kind of scratching my head, thinking, "What is it? Why is this such a big problem? What's the issue here?" The only thing I could come up with is that perhaps the Minister of Education had a problem with it. Perhaps because it speaks about the Education Act, the Minister of Education didn't want to see that particular language in the bill. That's quite possible. Who knows? I don't know. They know. The Minister of Children and Youth Services knows. The Minister of Education knows. I don't know whether any other Liberal members know. It would probably be an interesting exercise for you to ask your ministers and find out why it is that they decided to keep that discriminatory language in the bill. But from my perspective it's wrong and it doesn't belong in there. It's absolutely an egregious slap in the face to deaf children and blind children that they can't have the same kind of services that other kids have. That's just absolutely inappropriate.

One of the things the government did do in the amendments was they talked about the opportunity to perhaps establish deputy advocates, and that's a good thing. Unfortunately, I actually had asked for something much more proactive. I had asked that the legislation itself speak specifically to a First Nations deputy advocate. We heard from First Nations communities. They came and spoke to us. They travelled great distances. These young people were absolutely phenomenal, absolutely amazing,

and the presentations they made were so powerful and so moving, I just can't describe it. In the context of what those young people had to say to us and in the knowledge that First Nations children, that aboriginal kids, are far overrepresented in terms of the proportion of their population and the population of kids in the child welfare system—we know that that's the case. We know that aboriginal kids, First Nations kids, are far, far overrepresented in these systems. We also know that these children in the province of Ontario have some of the worst living standards that exist in our entire country, that exist on the continent, really, and that exist in the world. We know these kids have challenges that you wouldn't believe. We know that their education is meagre compared to what the rest of the children of this province have come to expect. Those children deserve the same. We know that their nutrition is not taken care of. We know that they have significant problems when it comes to the bare necessities, the basic necessities that we would expect all children in a country like Canada and a province like Ontario to have access to. They don't have access to them.

So First Nations communities came to the committee and they said, "Look, it only makes sense. It's only right that we have a deputy advocate for First Nations children who is situated closer to those remote communities in the north and who specifically would have an understanding of the customs and of the lifestyle and of the culture and of the languages"—the cultures, I should say—"that are part of our First Nations diaspora." That's what they wanted. I think that's what, at the very least, we should have provided them in this bill.

Granted, the bill does speak to the opportunity for the advocate to establish deputies. That's fine. And it speaks to, for example, deputies for First Nations and for special needs. That's all great and that's all positive. But the rub is, unless it's specifically in the legislation requiring that to happen—the way that the independent office of the advocate gets funded is through a mechanism here called BOIE, Board of Internal Economy. So the advocate would submit a budget to the Board of Internal Economy. The Board of Internal Economy approves the budget or doesn't, or negotiates the budget. If the legislation was clear and articulated straight out the requirement that this deputy position for First Nations kids be established, then when the advocate comes to the Board of Internal Economy for their budget, clearly part of that budget needs to include the establishment and the resourcing of that office for that purpose. The way it sits now is that there is really no assurance that in fact any deputy that the child advocate decides to recommend or suggest will get the funding necessary through BOIE. I would hope that would happen, but it's not in the legislation in a strong way, the way it should be, in my opinion. So I think that's an opportunity we missed. I was hoping we would be able to make it very clear in the legislation that that needed to happen.

Who else was left out? We know that deaf children in schools for the deaf and blind children in schools for the



blind and demonstration schools were left out. We know that, likely, First Nations kids are going to be left out. Who else? Interestingly enough, there's a group of kids who receive services and, after aging out, after turning 18, 19 or 20, are still able to receive some services. They're on this program called extended maintenance and care agreements. Basically it allows them to continue even though they are no longer a child or a youth because they are no longer under the age of 18. They may still be getting services to help support them to, for example, finish their education, go to college or university. It basically gives these kids a fighting chance to get through their early adult years without having all supports pulled out from under them. So that's a good thing.

The thing that's problematic is that the bill doesn't include those young people, those youth, those young adults. It doesn't include them in terms of their having the availability to access the child advocate. What sense does that make? We know that they're still receiving services through the Ministry of Children and Youth, right? We know that they're still receiving some of those services. If something goes wrong or if there's a problem, or if somebody tries to take those services away and they haven't been properly notified, or they don't believe that it's appropriate for those services to be removed from them or withdrawn, they have no recourse. At least, they don't have the recourse of calling up the child advocate and expecting services in the same way they had been receiving them before they turned 18. So it makes one wonder whether that might be another charter challenge. Maybe that will be, maybe on the basis of age, if they're being discriminated against on the basis of age, because they still get the services provided from children and youth services, so why can they not get the services of the advocate? I don't know. I don't know why that was left out. It was raised as an issue. It was raised as something that should be included, and for some reason it wasn't included. That is also problematic. So that's one of the places that I thought the bill fell short, and one of the things that I think the government missed in terms of putting together a bill that we could all know was covering all the bases.

There's another interesting problem with the bill. Again, it's a problem around the extent to which the advocate, in the role of doing systemic reviews—so the advocate can respond and is responding, and this gives the advocate the right, the ability, the opportunity to respond to children who call and want and need the services of the advocate. It puts an onus on service providers and agencies to make sure that young people know about their right to the advocate and are given the opportunity to make the call to the advocate. Again there were some amendments made, and I have to congratulate the government on that. There were changes made that allow that to happen in a much clearer way than in the initial draft of the bill. It's important to put that on the record, and I do acknowledge that those changes were made.

But the thing that's problematic is that during the process of the clause-by-clause, at the end of the day,

when you read the bill, nowhere do you see the as-of-right opportunity of the advocate to get documents, records or information from agencies and service providers. While the advocate can enter premises to meet with a child and communicate with a child, it doesn't say that the advocate can enter premises to obtain documents or records and it doesn't say that there's any obligation, necessarily, for those records or documents to be provided. If the advocate needs to do a systemic review or look at some agency or some series of agencies, or some services that are provided by a number of different agencies, the bill stymies that ability to do that very effectively and quickly.

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In discussing this omission, I think the government refers to the fact that the ability to do a review is outlined at the beginning of the bill and what some of the powers are of the advocate, so they rely on that to say, "Well, that's good enough." That supposes, then, that all of this information is to be made available. But the problem occurs: What if it isn't made available? If it isn't made available, what ends up happening is that the advocate then has to step back and go to a whole different process, perhaps a judicial review even, in order to get access to documents and records that would assist with a systemic review.

It seems to me that if we really were intent upon making sure that the child advocate had all of the tools at hand to do the job that we so expect and the job that our children deserve and need in the province, we wouldn't be forcing the advocate to go through extra hoops to be able to do that job effectively.

I am quite concerned that that issue wasn't covered off. In fact, if you look at section 18 of the bill, which is on page 9—I had actually put in an amendment to that section, which is "Protection of privacy and access to information." The amendment that I put was pretty basic, and it explains what I think is missing. I had moved:

"18.1(1) The advocate has the power to examine or copy any record or log book in the possession of an agency, service provider or facility for the purpose of performing his or her functions and powers under this act.

"(2) Nothing in this section abrogates solicitor-client privilege."

I put that in there so that the act would have been clear, had it been an amendment that was accepted, and of course, unfortunately it wasn't accepted. The government members voted down that amendment, but I thought that was an important amendment that would have allowed that very role or job or piece of the advocate's work to be very clarified in the legislation. Unfortunately, it's not there, and so we will only wait and see how that rolls out.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks, the reality is that, notwithstanding many of the problems that I've been raising, I think there has been a fair consensus around this chamber that it's worthwhile to put the bill forward as is. In other words, I don't think there's any



party that's going to be opposing it. I know that we're going to be on the record supporting the bill, notwithstanding its flaws, because we know very well that we need to start somewhere. I'm very, very hopeful that regardless of what party forms the next government in the province of Ontario, it won't take another five or 10 years to add some of the changes as we see the bill go forward. In other words, when we have a bill in front of us, when we have legislation in front of us—I know that the government whip talked about, "Oh, it's all just a starting point; it's all just the beginning; we all recognize that nothing's perfect." I beg to differ. We have an opportunity to do the very best we can for the vulnerable children and youth of this province, and we squandered, in some ways, that opportunity.

For the life of me, I don't know why many of these amendments have not been included. I really am not being obtuse; I don't understand why some of these amendments weren't included. I don't see where it hurts or where it's problematic or difficult to include kids on extended maintenance and care agreements. I don't know why it's difficult to ensure that all children, regardless of where they are in the system, are able to obtain the exact same level of advocacy from the advocate. I don't understand why the government resists having ombudsman oversight, to be that brother or sister role, if you will, to the role of the child advocate, because the child advocate said very clearly and passionately—and actually I met with her about this issue because I was concerned about it myself, and that's the issue about investigative powers. It came up in a discussion that I had with the advocate after the bill had been tabled initially. I know that it has been addressed in some of the submissions, particularly the one from Defence for Children International.

The issue was around—if the advocate is described as having investigative powers, the word "investigation" sets forth an expectation that it's an unbiased process, right? You're attacking this issue, this problem, this concern, from a position of non-bias. That's what an investigation apparently means in the legal sense of the word. What the child advocate convinced me, and I agreed with her after she explained the situation, is that she never wants to be considered to be unbiased. She's a child advocate. She goes into situations with the best interests of the child and with the bias in favour of the child. That's what we are actually asking her to do in her role as an independent child advocate.

I began to understand the difference between the work of a child advocate and the work of someone like an Ombudsman. When I say it's a kind of sister or brother role—as the Ombudsman said, comparing an advocate and an Ombudsman is like comparing apples to oranges. The roles rely on each other. The advocate can go so far, and if the advocate believes that there's something that needs a different perspective or a different set of eyes, then that advocate also has the opportunity to bring in the Ombudsman to help with a particular issue. Of course in this case, in the province of Ontario, unlike every other

province in the country, that doesn't happen, because the Ombudsman in Ontario doesn't have that ability to review children's aid societies in this province. Again, I don't know why that wasn't included as an amendment that the government would have accepted.

I want to conclude by saying there are other issues that I didn't touch on. There's the whole issue of the advocate and her—I keep saying "her" because our current advocate, of course, is Judy Finlay. Interestingly enough, our first advocate for the province of Ontario, Les Horne, actually was available and made remarks to our committee as well during the public hearings process, and we appreciated that very much. But I have to say that although there are many other issues, I think the main ones are access to documents and records and the young people who are still left out, those being the children that I've already described—children in schools for the deaf, schools for the blind, demonstration schools and children aging out, 18 or over. I think that's still a flaw in the bill. Access to records and documents, as I said, is still a big problem. Lack of ombudsman oversight is still a concern.

But I think overall—and I heard from stakeholders loud and clear; I made some calls after clause-by-clause and I determined that people really do want to see the bill go forward, notwithstanding its lumps and bumps. So I'm supporting that as well. I'm saying, you know what? It was my duty, my responsibility, to put on the record some of the concerns that I had. I do that because, notwithstanding the government whip's belief that these things can be put in place and don't need to be perfect—I wish those amendments had been put in place. But I put those things on the record now so that over the next year or two years or, at the outside, three, as we go through the experiences that are going to take place in this province as the independent office gets up and running and begins to provide the services under the auspices of the language provided in this legislation, we will be able to put an eye to some of the remarks that I've raised. We will be able to put an eye to some of the issues that were raised during the hearings process by our stakeholders.

I should actually take the time to say thank you very much to all of those wonderful people, whether they were children's lawyers or advocates for children in their own agencies and organizations, whether they were the young people themselves, whether they were First Nations young people, whether they were the BLOCK Headz from here in Toronto—honestly, it was a fabulous experience to hear what they had to say and to really listen to the issues that they brought forward.

So I really do hope that by putting some of these things on the record, we acknowledge that the bill is not the panacea, that it does, already at this point, have some things that need to be changed, and that regardless of which party forms the government after the next election, there remains unfinished business in the independent office of the child and youth advocate, and that unfinished business is to look to what is going to happen over the next couple of years and make sure that we are prepared to reopen and fix the legislation if the need is identified for that to happen.



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It's easy to be flip and say, "Well, nothing's perfect and we can make do." We are going to make do—and we're not being flip. We are going to make do, but the reality is that it's not easy. We saw how tough it was. This government bragged and bragged before they even won the election about how they were going to bring an independent child advocate to the province of Ontario. And we saw how it took not one year, not two years, but three years, and only the firestorm of a scandal around the Auditor General's report on children's aid societies finally got the government to move and table that shell of a bill that it was originally was. So here we are at the end of the process and putting on the record the fact that the bottom line is that the legislation is going to need to be changed. I only hope that some of the members here today are going to be sitting here in a couple of years. Remember that this bill, once it's put in place, is going to need to be reopened and be fixed. I think that if we can leave this chamber knowing that that's an expectation—not of mine and not of anybody else particularly who is sitting here, but of the people that have come and provided so much insightful information and have done so much work on this issue over the years—that's who we're going to have to account to when it comes to making changes eventually, because the bill does not satisfy all of the things it needs to satisfy in terms of being the bill it could have been.

Nonetheless, it is a first step, as many have said. When I did my calling around and talked to different people, they said, "We're not happy"—well, that's not true. They didn't say, "We're not happy." They said, "It's a good first step." That was pretty much what they said. They said, "There are still problems; there are still concerns. We still have things that we need to work out, issues that we're still concerned about. But we don't want the process to stop. We don't want any excuse for this independent office not to be established. It has to be established. It's long overdue." I respect that and I support the work that was done in this province by so many dedicated people. And I say that New Democrats are going to support the bill, notwithstanding its flaws, because at times you have to accept that the government wasn't prepared to go all the way on something but also recommit in supporting this bill. If I'm here after October 10, I'll be keeping a close eye on the evolution, if you will, of the independent office of the child advocate and look forward to hearing over the next 18 months maybe, 12 months, six months, what it's going to be like for the independent office of the child advocate and making sure that the bill we put in place today is actually going to do the job for children and youth in the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** Speaking to Bill 165 today, I think they say that a hallmark of a truly caring society is one that looks after its most vulnerable. One of the high points of my life to date has been the time I spent serving as a board member on the Halton Children's Aid Society board and a few of those years

serving as president. One of the people I was privileged to serve with was Les Horne, the first child advocate in the province of Ontario. I understand Les has gone through some sad times lately, and my thoughts go out to him. But I know that he would find some of the changes and some of the things that are moving ahead in the way that we treat children in the province of Ontario, children who are often in very vulnerable situations—I think Les would very much be in favour of this move and I'm sure will continue to advocate in the future for further improvements. If you look at some of the things that have taken place in this process, amendments have been accepted that have made the legislation stronger.

I think this government has developed a history of shining the light in places where it just hasn't been shone before. Sometimes when you do that, you find things that you don't want to find out. We've had the public auditor take a look at our hospitals, take a look at Ontario Hydro, take a look at children's aid societies. In the upcoming year, they'll be looking at long-term-care homes, they'll be looking at universities, but the point of the matter is that I think if you're going to do that, you need to be prepared to act on it. And certainly I think that the only way you bring independence to the child advocate in Ontario is to make that person an officer of the Legislature, which allows you the independence to move ahead in a way that is going to make some meaningful change. That simply hasn't been the way it has been done in the past.

I'd urge all members to support this bill. It's one that's worthy of support.

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** I'm pleased to rise today on comments from the member from Hamilton East on Bill 165, the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act, which would make the advocate an independent officer who reports to the Legislature.

She spoke quite passionately about the people who presented at committee, the people who work on behalf of our children—our vulnerable children, our youth—and what we need to do to better protect them. She made a lot of good points about the people who came. We thank them for all the work that they do and all the amendments that they brought forward—a lot, I take it, that weren't successful in being implemented in the bill—to make it a better bill.

She expressed strong concern that the advocate would not be able to have formal investigative powers to get to all the records for documents for the schools for the deaf, the schools for the blind, demonstration schools and for those who are over the age of 18. That's a very important point to make. This bill has taken a long time to come to the Legislature. They promised it, I think, two or three times. Three and a half years into the mandate, it's now here and finally on its third reading just a few weeks before this session will end and we go to the polls. It's a little tragic, when it was to be a priority, that it has taken that long to come forward.

But it is here before us. It's in its third reading. It's a step forward than it was before. I think the present



advocate, Judy Finlay, has done a great job for many, many years on this. But there were comments made from the member from Hamilton East about the fact that there's a lack of Ombudsman oversight. She has made a lot of good points. She spoke very passionately about it. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this bill before us today.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** I want to congratulate my colleague from Hamilton East for her thorough review of the bill, including many of the amendments that were made. I want to comment on a statement she made in reference to the member from Brant, because the member from Brant talked about the fact that no political party really has a monopoly on caring for children, and I believe he's right about that. He also said that nothing is perfect, which is true, and no political party can be perfect or any bill perfect. That is true. He then declares that this bill is a good first step, and this is where I differ with the member.

Most bills in this place come only after 10 or 15 years of critics bringing these issues to the attention of government—other people who deal with children's services, who bring the attention of concerns to the government—and it takes 10, 15, 20 years sometimes to be able to get a bill changed. So when you have an opportunity to make good changes, then deal with them, do them.

When you have an opportunity as a government to say, "We are the only province that doesn't have Ombudsman oversight over children's aid," there is no pride in that. There is no honour in that. Introduce that as a significant change, because it's good for you. They don't want to do it, member from Hamilton East, because the Ombudsman would cause problems for any government. That's why they're not doing it.

Also, the government creates informal methods of resolution for people in schools for the deaf and the blind which do not afford them the same level of advocacy. Why would we do that?

When you have an opportunity to make changes that make the bill better, do it, because you're not going to get another chance for 10, 15 or 20 years. That's what the member was saying, and that's what I support.

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** First, I'd like to commend the Minister for Children and Youth Services, as well as Judy Finlay, the present advocate, for the great, tremendous work that they've done, and all the stakeholders who participated in what I feel was the way that this place should flow when it comes to great legislation. It's bringing it forward, taking it to a standing committee, making sure that all parties, all stakeholders, get a chance to speak on the legislation to make it better, bringing forward some of those amendments and making sure that those changes happen so that this House can vote on a piece of legislation that will impact some of our most vulnerable citizens: our children, our kids.

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We just passed, a short while ago, a piece of legislation on endangered species—yesterday. We advocate for those who don't have a voice. Animals don't have a

voice, so we in this Legislature do something to protect them. It's the same with our children. Many of our children have so many challenges—mental, physical or others—and they need that strong, neutral voice to be there for them, to make sure there's someone in their corner, fighting for them, making sure their voice is heard on issues like children's mental health, where our government has invested a great deal more money. We're all proud of that.

Children with complex special needs, those who are deaf, deaf and blind, or learning disabled—all of them need this advocate. They need this advocate to be somebody who presents before the Legislature, not to the ministry. I know the previous government, for too long, wanted to muzzle—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. It's time for a reply.

**Ms. Horwath:** I want to thank the members from Oakville, Haliburton-Victoria-Brock, Trinity-Spadina and Mississauga East for their remarks, particularly the ones that focused on the bill as it is before us now, not on some of the extraneous pieces but on the actual, real legislation that's before us.

I see we're having some people who were here earlier leaving, particularly the child advocate we have in place currently in the province of Ontario. I want to take my last few minutes on this bill to thank her particularly for all the work she's done. She's the current child advocate. I know there's a section in this bill that provides for her as our interim—there's transitional language that makes her the interim independent child advocate once this bill is passed. That gives me great comfort because I know that Judy Finlay has been a passionate and extremely effective advocate while under the auspices of the ministry. I know that, as we transition to the independent office, there is no one I have more confidence in in terms of setting the right tone, in terms of setting the right framework, if you will, for this to be a very positive, independent office.

In closing my remarks on this bill, I think it's appropriate for me to thank Judy Finlay, to say goodnight and to thank Matthew Geigen-Miller, who's leaving too, and all of the other people who have been here today. Thank you so much for the work you've done. It's certainly a victory for everyone in terms of moving forward. I know that the work you've done is going to continue to inform the independent advocate office over the next several months and years to come.

**The Acting Speaker:** It's time for further debate.

**Mr. Berardinetti:** It's a pleasure, as we wind up the clock here, to have an opportunity to say a few words on Bill 165, An Act to establish and provide for the office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth.

I had the pleasure, as I mentioned earlier this afternoon, of being at committee at the time this bill was being debated. We heard for over two days from a number of deputations—actually about two days' worth. We had children's experts come in, and all sorts of other professionals, but the deputations that were most moving and that I think resulted in changes to Bill 165 came from



the young people. A lot of them came from outside of Toronto. We had people from northern Ontario, people from the very far north, people from our native communities and youth groups. As I said earlier—and I'll reiterate it again—their presentations were excellent and very moving and well prepared and I think were very convincing. To those that made presentations and organized presentations, I thank them and I congratulate them on the excellent work that they did in helping to shape up this bill, because in the end this is not a bill for us, it's a bill for them.

On our second day of deputations, towards the end, we heard from some of the native communities on some of the issues that face them. They raised various issues and concerns about wanting an independent advocate and the fact that previously the advocate was not independent and the problems with that. With a non-independent advocate, that person would report back to the ministry or back to the government of the day, and the government could take the report or information from the advocate and not necessarily do anything with it. The key-stone, I think, to this bill is that it provides for an independent auditor who is an officer of the Legislature, a person who has the authority to go out there in the community, meet with youth, make recommendations and begin to find out where the real problems are regarding youth. This bill will provide an independent voice for children and for youth.

I think that nobody should be overlooking the work of the youth advocate. The youth advocate should be self-policed. If we place an ombudsman or another body overlooking the work of the youth advocate, I think it diminishes the power of the youth advocate. That was my second point, that some members of this Legislature seem to want to hand over virtually everything to the Ombudsman. If that becomes the case, why should we bother debating bills? Perhaps the Ombudsman should be running the province, if you like what the Ombudsman is doing. I like some of the reports that have come forward, and some of the information. Obviously, excellent work has been done by the Ombudsman's office. They continue to provide good input into how we operate and whether or not there are requirements for checks and balances. But at some point we've got say, "This is the Ombudsman's job. Other than that, we have independence given to other officials as well."

I feel strongly, for the sake of the youth, that the person here, the youth advocate, be an independent individual, somebody who can speak for children without any kind of limitation or any kind of legislation limiting their powers. I think this legislation meets our commitment that we made to make the advocate an independent officer, as independent as the Auditor General, as independent as possibly can be.

I just want to mention very briefly a few other points. Besides the good work done by those who made presentations—again, they were excellent—I really believe that members of the committee did excellent work too with their questioning and prodding away and digging into the bill. It seemed that everyone was into this bill

and into making changes and making proposals to the bill. We actually took the unprecedented step of taking this bill, after it had finished committee hearings, and bringing it back to committee, on a motion made by the House leader, so that we could add an extra section. If I'm not mistaken, that was a new section 16.1: "If the advocate seeks to enter the premises of an agency or of a service provider to communicate with children or youth, the agency or service provider, as the case may be, shall permit the advocate to do so." That was done when this went back to committee. I think this was something that the opposition wanted to see. We listened. It was their idea. We went back to committee and we added that section. It gives additional powers to the youth advocate, which that person, she or he, may need in the future to enter into premises to do the work that they have to do.

1750

A number of people also spoke about a special need to recognize the north. I think that, without a doubt, that is a requirement. We need the youth advocate to look at the special concerns of youth in the north. Their problems could be different than the problems of people that live in larger cities, places like Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor or Ottawa. We do provide here that the advocate can hire staff and is allowed to delegate authority to staff to do the work that has to be done. I think that's the best way to deal with it. You've got one person who's responsible for everything, who can hire and have people do some of the work that needs to be done to look after perhaps special concerns. I think we addressed that concern in the bill.

We did several other things when we went to committee that were important. We removed the requirement for the advocate to provide a copy of her or his report annually. We removed the requirement for special reports 30 days in advance; we got rid of that. We've enshrined in the legislation the advocate's ability to continue to provide advocacy services to children and youth in provincial demonstration schools and youth in court holding cells. We removed the requirement for the advocate to consult with a minister or ministry before forming a final opinion. This is one of the most important functions, as I mentioned earlier. We passed an opposition amendment that enables the new independent advocate to have deputy advocates, such as a deputy for aboriginal children and youth, if he or she chooses. Once again, input from the opposition was listened to, input from the opposition was implemented, and input from the opposition has now become part of this bill. The government has worked with the opposition parties in a spirit of co-operation—not because it's only good for the Liberals, not because it's bad for the Conservatives or the NDP, but because it's right. That's why we did it: We did it because it was something that was right for the youth of this province.

We are also placing an onus on service providers to ensure that children and youth who are served by the advocate are made aware of the advocate's existence. This issue came up a lot during committee. People didn't know—some of the young people said, "I didn't know

that an advocate existed. I found out from my friend Joe or from my friend Jane.” But we are going to make service providers start advertising, or at least putting out the word that children and youth have the opportunity to communicate with the advocate and are provided with the means by which to contact the advocate, and that the advocate is provided with access to these children and youth. We’ve opened the doors to allow this two-way communication to exist between the advocate and the young people who need the service.

This bill—and I hope it passes soon—would give the powers that are required for the advocate to serve young people who need to be served. We also passed an opposition amendment that would require the new independent advocate to have “significant experience in areas such as children’s mental health, child welfare, developmental services, youth justice, education or pediatric health services.” The children and youth of our province are best served by an independent advocate well versed in children’s issues. So we’re not making this a plum appointment position. We’re not getting somebody out of the community, somebody of a patronage nature to do this job; we’re getting a professional with experience.

There are several good things about the bill. I hope that we can pass this quickly and put it into law—again, not for our benefit, not for the opposition’s benefit, but for the benefit of the children and the people here today who have been listening and who are out there in the community.

I think my time is slowly winding up. With those few comments, I strongly suggest we support it. I think Judy Finlay, the present child advocate, was very supportive of it. Once again, I have to say that the young people did an excellent job in presentations, and the representatives from Hamilton East and Nepean–Carleton, as well as our representative on our side of the committee, the member from Willowdale, did an absolutely excellent job in asking the questions that needed to be asked so that the bill could be modified, strengthened and made into law.

Those are my comments. I hope the bill passes and becomes law.

**The Acting Speaker:** It being approximately 6 p.m. of the clock, it’s time to adjourn the House. This House stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. of the clock on Monday, May 28, 2007.

*The House adjourned at 1756.*



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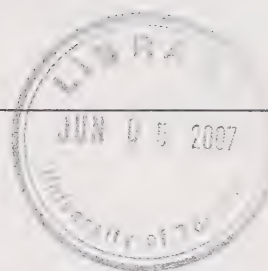
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of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
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Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 28 May 2007**

**Lundi 28 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 28 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 28 mai 2007

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### CATTLE FARMERS

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** Tomorrow, Tuesday, the Ontario cattlemen come to Queen's Park for their fourth annual beef barbecue: great service and the best beef in the world. Join the cattlemen tomorrow out on the front lawn between noon and 1:30 and taste the quality for yourself—delicious—but remember, often our eyes are larger than our stomachs.

Farmers of all commodities are still reeling from this year's disastrous McGuinty Liberal agriculture cuts. This year's carnage comes in at \$191 million. Ontario's cattlemen, and all farmers, need the respect of their provincial government. With the endless rules and regulation, the red tape, the forms to fill out and the paperwork, cattlemen are calling on this government to do a full regulatory impact analysis on regulations prior to the regulations being created. For example, we think of the inevitable regulations coming under this government's recent source water protection legislation.

Ontario's close to 20,000 cattle farmers generate nearly \$1 billion in value added to our gross domestic product in Ontario, creating an additional 11,000 good-paying jobs. An expansion of the beef industry could have the same economic impact as a new automobile assembly plant.

Support our cattle farmers—support our family farms—tomorrow, and every day, for that matter. Come out to the barbecue. Learn about the issues, and buy Canadian beef.

### SKYJACK INC.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington):** Last week, Minister of Economic Development and Trade Sandra Pupatello visited my riding to announce a \$2.48-million loan from the advanced manufacturing investment strategy fund to Skyjack Inc. The loan will support a new industrial research and development centre of excellence at Skyjack that will boost innovation and create jobs in the Guelph area.

Skyjack is a division of Linamar Corp.'s industrial group and manufactures mobile aerial work platforms. Skyjack is known all over the world for their scissor lift

platforms. For example, the CSI television series uses Skyjack lifts to get those great shots of bodies at their crime scenes.

Total investment by the company and the province is \$24.8 million, with the project expected to create the equivalent of 358 new positions over five years. The project will focus on the development of a new line of boom lifts and tele-handlers, which are used where reach and extension are required. The centre of excellence will allow Skyjack to strengthen their position as a world leader.

I'm proud that the McGuinty government is helping Skyjack grow its business and support the local economy. This announcement is a terrific vote of confidence in the company's workers and in Guelph's manufacturing sector.

## ELECTORAL REFORM

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** Today our leader, John Tory, will introduce a resolution that, in the opinion of this House, the federal Parliament should reconsider the proposed changes to the composition of the House of Commons. Our party believes in rep by pop, representation by population. Right now, Ontario is under-represented in the House of Commons. While the proposed changes to increase the number of seats from 106 to 116 would improve the situation for our province, we would still remain under-represented.

Reading the reports that the McGuinty government is upset with these proposed changes really draws a laugh from me, in irony. This is the same government that pushed through legislation to maintain 11 seats in northern Ontario without redistributing southern Ontario to maintain any semblance of equal representation. On October 10, the next election, the average riding in southern Ontario will have 110,000 constituents, while northern Ontario ridings will have an average of 76,000 constituents.

We could have had 11 ridings in the north and maintained fairness for all Ontario. I introduced a bill in this Legislature which would have maintained 11 ridings in the north permanently but would have required southern Ontario to be redistributed to ensure fairness for all Ontarians.

Mr. McGuinty, you can't complain to the feds about rep by pop for our province when you broke the very same principle for our provincial election here in Ontario: Rep by pop at the federal level; rep by pop at the provincial level.



## LABOUR DISPUTE

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** The workers at Grant Waferboard now have been locked out since last September in Timmins, Ontario. The employer there, Peter Grant, has decided in this market condition to take advantage of the situation in order to try to gain concessions from the workers at the Grant Waferboard mill in Timmins. I, along with my federal member, Charlie Angus; our mayor, Mr. Tom Laughren; the chamber of commerce; the local businesses; the labour council and others have been calling on Peter Grant to come back to the table in order to negotiate an agreement so that we can move on with what is happening in the forest industry in northern Ontario. I, the mayor, the federal member of Parliament, Cec Makowski, the president of the union, and others have been trying to get Mr. Grant to come to the table, but to date he has been refusing.

It's clear at this point that what is needed is intervention on the part of the Premier and the Minister of Labour. I'm asking the government today in the House to get the Premier to get the Minister of Labour to contact Mr. Grant in order to put some pressure on him to come back to the table and get off this kick that he has of keeping these workers locked out for the last number of months.

It is clear there is a consensus that has grown in the community, and that consensus is that people are supporting the workers in what is going on at that particular lockout. They are mad, they are upset with Mr. Grant for doing what he has done. I call today on the Minister of Labour and the Premier of Ontario to do what needs to be done in order to bring Mr. Grant back to the table so that at the end of the day we're able to negotiate an agreement and everybody can get on with their lives.

## TOWN OF OAKVILLE

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** I rise today to highlight a very historic milestone for my community of Oakville. As I make this announcement, I'm joined in the west members' gallery today by some very fine young ladies from St. Mildred's-Lightbourn School in Oakville.

Yesterday marked the town of Oakville's 150th anniversary. Our community has grown from a small village in the 1800s to become one of Ontario's most desirable places to live. Oakville has become a diverse community, with a rich cultural and artistic community and a very vibrant local economy. A variety of wonderful events took place over the course of the day to celebrate 150 years of Oakville. I was proud to host one of the many community barbecues across town, and I participated in a lot of fun events.

I'd like to thank Mayor Rob Burton, members of Oakville town council, the town staff and the 150th-anniversary committee for all their hard work. I'd also like to congratulate all the people of Oakville and the many residents and families who make Oakville the great

place it is to live, work, raise a family and, obviously, attend school.

1340

## VILLE D'OTTAWA

**M<sup>me</sup> Lisa MacLeod (Nepean–Carleton):** Voilà déjà quatre ans depuis l'élection du gouvernement McGuinty, et les résidents d'Ottawa attendent toujours un traitement équitable de la part de la province. En termes d'investissements dans les villes, un rapport municipal démontre que le gouvernement McGuinty dépense près de 900 \$ de moins pour chaque résident d'Ottawa en comparaison avec Toronto. Comment expliquer cette iniquité? Mes concitoyens de la région d'Ottawa méritent mieux.

Les résidents de l'est attendent des améliorations à la jonction de la 417 et la 164. Ces deux centres veulent un palais des congrès moderne et efficace. Ces deux régions ont besoin d'investissements dans l'infrastructure. Les gestes symboliques et les grandes promesses faits pendant la campagne pré-électorale sont nettement insuffisants. Avec un premier ministre de la ville, deux anciens conseillers municipaux au cabinet et un troisième au caucus, les gens d'Ottawa auraient dû avoir mieux, mais le Parti libéral les a abandonnés.

GODERICH AND DISTRICT  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce):** I rise to inform the House of an exciting and esteemed honour that has been bestowed upon one of my communities. The Goderich and District Chamber of Commerce has been selected as a finalist in the best new membership recruitment category of the World Chambers Competition of 2007. The application process for this award consisted of four categories, and applications were received from 38 countries across the world. Members of the Goderich chamber will travel to Istanbul to present their project for the final judging of the competition on July 5. The winner of this prestigious award will be selected the following day, at the event's gala dinner.

This year's competition, which attracted a record number of applicants, will see Goderich compete against Vancouver, Anguilla, Sarajevo and Saudi Arabia in the new membership recruitment category. The Goderich and District Chamber of Commerce is being considered for this award based upon their exceptional growth, from 54 members to 156 members at the time of application. This ceremony will provide Goderich's chamber with an excellent opportunity to increase exposure for the chamber's members, the town of Goderich, Huron county and the province of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this House to join with me in congratulating the Goderich and District Chamber of Commerce on this very impressive honour and wishing them all the best in Istanbul in July.

## CHILD AND YOUTH HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** It is a pleasure to rise today to highlight the wonderful progress that the McGuinty government has made towards the enhancement of child and youth health services in my riding of Brant and indeed throughout the province of Ontario. These types of investments are so important to the people of my riding because they provide services to children and youth with social and behavioural problems, along with some who have mental health challenges and many who have multiple disabilities.

Recently, I was honoured to host the Minister of Children and Youth Services, Mary Anne Chambers, as she toured the Woodview Children's Centre office complex in Brantford and saw first-hand how these types of investments are directly benefiting children. Not only did the minister talk with the representatives from various service agencies and parents; she also spent time to chat with each of the children who attended the announcement, a gesture that did not go unappreciated and unnoticed by staff, the children themselves and their parents, I can assure you.

I'm also delighted to tell the House that Minister Chambers announced that five Brantford agencies will be receiving over \$176,000 in additional funding, including the Woodview Children's Centre, St. Leonard's Society of Brant, Nova Vita Women's Shelter, Contact Brant and Lansdowne Children's Centre. I have worked very closely with all of these agencies in the past as a former principal and as MPP, and I cannot say enough about the great work they do in our community and the tremendous impact they have on the lives of our children and their families. We even received a letter back immediately from Woodview that indicated that she can come back any time.

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe):** I rise today to speak about the great priority to my constituents and the people of London: health care. When the Tories were in government, they cut more than \$23 million from St. Joseph's hospital and more than \$27 million from the London Health Sciences Centre.

The McGuinty government has provided unprecedented financial support to the London-area hospitals, such as more than \$80 million as part of the peer review process.

As well, London Health Sciences Centre has received a 44.7% increase in base hospital funding since 2003. The McGuinty government has invested \$14.7 million for a wait times strategy at London Health Sciences Centre and \$489 million in capital funding in the year 2006-07 for upgrading.

St. Joseph's has received a 23% increase to base hospital funding since 2003. We have invested \$2.1 million for a wait times strategy and \$323 million for capital funding in the year 2006-07 for upgrades.

We've made progress. The party opposite wants to take us back. Last week, the opposition leader tried to slip his health care agenda under the radar in a low-profile event, hoping no one would notice.

The party's health care agenda is a blueprint for taking us back—back to the days of cut, damage and neglect. His numbers just don't add up. How else do you explain taking \$2.5 billion out of the health care system—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

**Mr. Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on finance and economic affairs and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Mr. Hoy from the standing committee on finance and economic affairs presents the committee's report as follows, and moves its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 174, An Act to enact the Taxation Act, 2007 and make complementary and other amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 174, Loi édictant la Loi de 2007 sur les impôts et apportant des modifications complémentaires et autres à diverses lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** No?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1349 to 1354.*

**The Speaker:** Mr. Hoy has moved that the standing committee on finance and economic affairs report regarding Bill 174 be received and adopted. All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

## Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hoy, Pat	Patten, Richard
Arthurs, Wayne	Hudak, Tim	Phillips, Gerry
Balkissoon, Bas	Jeffrey, Linda	Racco, Mario G.
Barrett, Toby	Klees, Frank	Ramal, Khalil
Bentley, Christopher	Kular, Kuldip	Ruprecht, Tony
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Cansfield, Donna H.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Scott, Laurie
Caplan, David	Levac, Dave	Smith, Monique
Chan, Michael	MacLeod, Lisa	Smitherman, George
Chudleigh, Ted	Marsales, Judy	Sterling, Norman W.
Colle, Mike	Matthews, Deborah	Tascona, Joseph N.
Delaney, Bob	McMeekin, Ted	Tory, John
Di Cocco, Caroline	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Dombrowsky, Leona	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Elliott, Christine	Milloy, John	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Mitchell, Carol	Zimmer, David



Fonseca, Peter  
Hardeman, Ernie

Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Munro, Julia

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Bisson, Gilles  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Ferreira, Paul

Kormos, Peter  
Martel, Shelley  
Prue, Michael

Tabuns, Peter

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 55; the nays are 7.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 9, 2007, the bill is ordered for third reading.

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** I beg leave to present a report on the Ontario health insurance plan from the standing committee on public accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Sterling presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Mr. Sterling:** Mr. Speaker, I believe I have the floor. As you know, the public accounts committee reviews the auditor's report, which was tabled in December of last year. One of the subjects that the auditor dealt with was the Ontario health insurance plan and, in particular, the use and abuse of Ontario health cards. In his report, he pointed out that it would take another 14 years to convert the famous red-and-white health cards to the green photo health cards. He also pointed out that there were approximately 300,000 more health cards in circulation than the population in the province. In fairness, during our hearings we found out that that number—300,000—had been reduced significantly prior to our hearings but after the report of the auditor.

In going through the recommendations, the committee was particularly concerned with regard to the focus by the ministry and the Ontario health insurance plan on fraud and abuse by the providers of health care services, but there was little concern or focus on those who might abuse their individual health cards. Therefore, the committee felt that there was a needed focus on that latter rather than that prior.

One of the main recommendations of the committee was that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care report to the committee on options to reduce the time needed for the conversion, including related time frames by which the red-and-white health cards can be converted to photo health cards. And it added—it is somewhat unusual for the committee to make this recommendation—that one option the committee would like to have considered by the Ministry of Health is an extension of the renewal time for photo health cards. Any savings, we

felt, from this extension should be allocated to expediting the replacement of the red-and-white health cards.

We believe that that time frame can be gapped and that we can indeed improve on preventing the fraud and misuse of health cards. There are many recommendations in this report to do that.

With that, Mr. Speaker, and your kind remarks to me at the opening, I move adjournment of this debate.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** I beg leave to present a report on agencies, boards and commissions: Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, from the standing committee on government agencies and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mrs. Munro presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Mrs. Munro:** I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those people who made presentations, both in person and in writing, and the opportunity they provided the committee to examine the whole issue of WSIB. I just want to thank them for their contribution.

I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

#### BIRTH OF MEMBER'S GRANDCHILD

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex):** I just want to let the assembly know that the Van Bommel baby-watch is over, at least for the time being, with the birth of the 11th grandchild, Matthew James Van Bommel. He weighed in at nine pounds, one ounce, so he is a big fellow, and he was born four days after his big brother René's first birthday. Mom and dad are doing well, and Opa has another little farmer in training.

#### VISITORS

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: It is my privilege today to welcome to the House a number of people who are fighting for better protection for new home buyers: Karen Somerville and Alan Greenspun of Canadians for Properly Built Homes, the Griese family, Joe and Joanne West, Aline and Claude Martel, and many others. Welcome to this House and thank you for your efforts.

## MOTIONS

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley seeks unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 96(g), notice for ballot item 12 be waived.

**The Speaker:** Mr. Bradley moves that, notwithstanding standing order 96(g), notice for ballot item 12 be waived. Agreed? Carried.

## HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, May 28, 2007, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number 364. Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1404 to 1409.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

## Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Bentley, Christopher  
Bountrogianni, Marie  
Bradley, James J.  
Bryant, Michael  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Caplan, David  
Chan, Michael  
Colle, Mike  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Dombrowsky, Leona  
Duguid, Brad  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Fonseca, Peter

Gerretsen, John  
Hoy, Pat  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Kular, Kuldip  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Levac, Dave  
Marsales, Judy  
Matthews, Deborah  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Oraziotti, David  
Parsons, Ernie

Patten, Richard  
Phillips, Gerry  
Pupatello, Sandra  
Racco, Mario G.  
Ramal, Khalil  
Ramsay, David  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Takhar, Harinder S.  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Zimmer, David

## Nays

Amott, Ted  
Barrett, Toby

Hudak, Tim  
Klees, Frank

Prue, Michael  
Runciman, Robert W.

Bisson, Gilles  
Chudleigh, Ted  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Elliott, Christine  
Ferreira, Paul  
Hardeman, Ernie

Kormos, Peter  
MacLeod, Lisa  
Marchese, Rosario  
Martel, Shelley  
Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia

Scott, Laurie  
Sterling, Norman W.  
Tabuns, Peter  
Tascona, Joseph N.  
Tory, John  
Witmer, Elizabeth

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 49; the nays are 24.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES

## NORTHERN ONTARIO GROWTH PLAN

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I am very pleased to rise today to tell honourable members how the McGuinty government is taking yet another important step in promoting strategic sustainable growth in this province in accordance with the Places to Grow Act.

It has been a privilege to share with honourable members on numerous occasions news about how the first of these growth plans, the award-winning growth plan for the greater Golden Horseshoe, has gained worldwide recognition as a plan that brings vision, foresight and a comprehensive approach to planning for growth in Canada's fastest-growing region.

Over the past few months, I have told this House about the growth plan being honoured by the American Planning Association with its Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan, making it the first plan from outside the United States to win this prestigious award.

And next month, the growth plan for the greater Golden Horseshoe will receive another major award at a ceremony in Quebec City, this one from the Canadian Institute of Planners, which will recognize the plan for excellence in re-urbanization planning.

*Applause.*

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** Thank you. Earlier this month, the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal's Ontario Growth Secretariat convened the Places to Grow summit in Toronto, a conference that brought together municipal leaders, worldwide experts on growth planning and staff from our ministry to share ideas about how we can press ahead with growth planning, not only in the greater Golden Horseshoe but right across the province of Ontario.

One of the resounding messages that everyone at the summit took home with them, a message reinforced by Premier McGuinty in his address to delegates, was the idea that planning for a strong, sustainable future is an ongoing, continual and important process.

The same day that I was pleased to host the growth summit here in Toronto, where we worked on implementing our seminal plan, the McGuinty government charted a new path in another region of the



province. Simultaneously on that day, my colleagues the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, Rick Bartolucci, and the Minister of Natural Resources, David Ramsay, announced the start of a growth plan for northern Ontario, in Sudbury and Thunder Bay, respectively.

The McGuinty government's growth plan for northern Ontario will lead to a stronger, more prosperous north. In the words of Minister Bartolucci, "Keeping northern Ontario strong and prosperous today and in the future is important for all of us. For our communities to prosper, we need a plan to address the challenges, such as youth retention and the need for improved infrastructure networks."

Minister Ramsay also summed up the plan's scope, aim and future impact very well when he said, "We need the north to be able to compete globally by directing investments, planning and development to encourage and support viable long-term growth of northern communities. This plan is consistent with the government's forest sector competitiveness strategy and will aim to ensure a balance between economic and environmental concerns."

Our northern growth plan will continue our approach, begun with the growth plan for the greater Golden Horseshoe, of developing a plan for regional growth through consultation with local leaders and key stakeholders who live in the region. With their valuable input, we will have a growth plan for northern Ontario that will help our communities be able to be prosperous places to live, work and play.

But I don't think that I need to tell any of the honourable members that the growth challenges faced by northern Ontario are very different than those faced by residents of the greater Golden Horseshoe. A growth plan for northern Ontario must focus on achieving a more sustained pattern of growth while recognizing the unique challenges like stemming youth out-migration, creating sustainable regions and improving infrastructure networks.

I'd also like to pause here to recognize the valuable work that has already been done by northern mayors, residents and northern development councils that have provided with us a good and strong base to build on.

I can assure all honourable members here today that the growth plan for northern Ontario will provide an important vehicle for aligning and augmenting the other government initiatives and policies for the north. That is why the plan will build on such other initiatives of our government like the northern prosperity plan, the forest sector competitiveness strategy, the northern Ontario highways strategy, and investments, of course, through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp.

As an important first step, our government will convene a dedicated ministers' table, chaired by Minister Bartolucci, that will ensure the coordination of provincial government policies and investments in the development and implementation of the growth plan, reflecting northern priorities in key areas such as education, housing, recreation and transportation.

The result of the plan will be a coordinated approach at the provincial and municipal levels to ensure that investments, planning and development will encourage and support economically and environmentally sustainable growth in northern communities.

Over the next few months, our government will be working closely with aboriginal leaders, municipal leaders, and education, business and industry groups as well as others to develop this very exciting plan. The leadership of Ministers Bartolucci and Ramsay and strong local members from the north, such as our colleagues from Nipissing, Monique Smith; Sault Ste. Marie, David Oraziatti; Thunder Bay-Superior North, Michael Gravelle; and Thunder Bay-Atikokan, Bill Mauro, will be essential to the process of shaping the plan. I invite all members from all sides of this House to work and support developing a northern growth plan.

I'd like to share with the honourable members today a few examples of the excitement that has stemmed from the announcement of a growth plan for northern Ontario.

Anne Krassilowsky, mayor of Dryden and president of NOMA, the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association, said, "This is the answer to what we've been trying to formulate with NOMA and the common voice and the partnerships we brought to the table. This"—referring to the growth plan for northern Ontario—"is the perfect key."

1420

From the mayor of Timmins, Tom Laughren: "Having 15 to 18 cabinet ministers supporting ideas for the north—that's huge, and something municipal politicians have been trying to do for a long time.... I thank Minister Bartolucci for spearheading this.... We have the expertise and the infrastructure in the north; we just need some help in getting companies to look north."

From Steve Kidd, president, Northeastern Ontario Chamber of Commerce: This, the northern Ontario growth plan, "represents an important milestone for the future of northern Ontario's economic success. The Northeastern Ontario Chamber of Commerce has been actively calling on the government to bring the Places to Grow initiative north. Having a plan for growth is critical to the enhancement and, indeed, transformation of some sectors of our economy moving forward. I commend Minister Bartolucci and his northern caucus for their success in drawing the government's attention to the north with such a meaningful and aggressive initiative. The NOCC looks forward to working with Ministers Caplan and Bartolucci to develop this economic blueprint for the north."

From Barry Streib, president of the Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce: "This initiative will require a strong collaborative effort from both residents and businesses across the north, as well as from the government itself. I welcome the decision to form a ministers' table that will be dedicated to developing and implementing an economic plan of action that will set the course for attracting new investment and building on the



strengths of the north. NOACC looks forward to working with the government to make this initiative a reality.”

Those are just a few examples of what the reaction has been to our announcement some 10 days ago. Our government is committed to strong, sustainable growth for all regions of the province of Ontario and committed to developing plans for this growth in ways that respect and enhance unique regional ways of life. Our growth plan for northern Ontario is the next step in this commitment, and I am confident that all honourable members gathered here today will join with me in welcoming the McGuinty government's commitment to keep the north strong and prosperous through the northern growth plan.

## ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED

### ACCESSIBILITÉ POUR LES PERSONNES HANDICAPÉES

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** Sunday marked the beginning of National Access Awareness Week in Canada. Today, approximately 1.5 million people in Ontario live with a disability. That is more than 13% of Ontario's population. And with an aging population, by 2025, one in five Ontarians, or 20% of us, will be over the age of 65 and can expect to experience some kind of disability ourselves. And yet, as we're getting older and as our physical limitations are increasing, the world around us is not adapting quickly enough. That needs to change.

Il y a près de deux ans, notre gouvernement a adopté la Loi de 2005 sur l'accessibilité pour les personnes handicapées de l'Ontario. La loi prévoit un plan pour faire en sorte que l'Ontario soit accessible pour tous d'ici 2025 grâce à l'établissement de nouvelles normes d'accessibilité obligatoires pour un bon nombre des secteurs les plus importants de notre vie, tels que le transport et le service à la clientèle. Toutefois, l'adoption d'une loi stricte n'est qu'une partie de la solution.

La barrière sociale est le plus important problème auquel nous devons nous attaquer. Nous devons rappeler au public que les personnes ayant un handicap ne constituent pas un petit groupe. Nous devons lui rappeler qu'il vaut la peine de prendre des mesures pour répondre aux besoins des personnes ayant un handicap, et nous devons rappeler au public que la société entière est pénalisée si elle continue à appuyer un monde où les personnes ayant un handicap n'ont pas la chance de participer pleinement.

This morning, I was pleased to attend the opening ceremonies of the Ontario Public Service Accessibility Expo that is going on here at Queen's Park. At the expo, members of the public service can visit booths, hear speakers and participate in fun events, all to help them learn more about accessibility and what it means for Ontario. I firmly believe that if we as a government are to encourage greater accessibility from our private sector partners, we need to lead by example and make sure that

we are doing everything we can to make the Ontario government as accessible as possible.

At the expo this morning, I also took the opportunity to launch our government's new public awareness campaign called AccessON: Breaking Barriers Together.

La campagne vise à sensibiliser davantage le public, le milieu des affaires et le secteur parapublic aux obstacles auxquels font face les personnes ayant un handicap; à ce que la Loi de 2005 sur l'accessibilité pour les personnes handicapées de l'Ontario, adoptée par le gouvernement, signifie pour eux; et à l'incidence qu'auront, pour les entreprises et les organisations de l'Ontario, les nouvelles normes provinciales d'accessibilité.

The campaign is web-centred and offers information, tools and resources to the business community and to the public at [www.accesson.ca](http://www.accesson.ca).

If we can challenge public attitudes and perceptions about disability, I believe we can begin to clearly demonstrate the importance of accessibility. Once people have a better understanding about how barriers impact daily living for people with disabilities, they will be actively involved in expecting our businesses, governments and communities to be accessible to everyone.

Chacun de nous a un ami, un parent ou un collègue ayant un handicap. Certains handicaps sont visibles, d'autres non, mais si nous sommes conscients des obstacles qui empêchent nos amis ou les membres de notre famille de participer à nos activités, nous sommes enclins à éliminer ces obstacles. Et c'est ce que nous demandons aux Ontariens et aux Ontariennes de faire : être les défenseurs de l'accessibilité.

C'est exactement en quoi consiste l'initiative « ON donne accès ». Il s'agit d'une invitation à passer à l'action; une invitation à reconnaître les obstacles et un engagement à les éliminer.

This week, I encourage all members of this House to attend the accessibility expo which is running here today and tomorrow. I also encourage them to get out into their own communities and celebrate the individuals and the organizations that are breaking down barriers, the champions of change. Everyone here knows the importance of full participation and equality for Ontarians with disabilities. We all want Ontario to be a leader in building a society of full inclusion.

Nous voulons tous léguer à nos enfants une société où le monde a la chance de réaliser son potentiel. Il s'agit là d'un objectif ambitieux, mais je crois que les Ontariens et les Ontariennes ont le courage nécessaire pour l'atteindre. Nous savons tous que c'est ce qu'il faut faire et qu'ensemble, nous pouvons accomplir de grandes choses.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses?

## NORTHERN ONTARIO GROWTH PLAN

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** I rise on behalf of John Tory and the PC caucus to respond to the McGuinty government's so-called northern growth plan. The government has had their northern shrinkage



plan in place for three and a half years and they've been very successful at it. The government's announcement to consult interested groups in order to develop a growth plan for northern Ontario is completely and totally inadequate. Communities across the north have been begging for help for years. Instead of providing real assistance, the government waits three and a half years to deliver this weak response.

The challenges in the north have been studied to death. Northerners want action, and action takes leadership, something this government just has not shown. The only things growing in the north are the lineups for employment insurance and the crowds at the bus and train stations filled with youth heading for the south or to other provinces to find jobs.

McGuinty's lack of leadership in the north has had negative economic consequences as whole communities are struggling to keep and find employment. That is particularly true in the forestry industry, where the north has lost over 8,000 forestry jobs, most of them in northern Ontario. The Liberals' plan to address the job loss was to ignore their own expert panel's recommendations and instead, they've said that they are "beginning to turn the corner." However, as we know in the forestry industry, there is still a crisis, and every week there is an announcement about another mill closing.

1430

This government's actions, with their recently announced diamond tax, demonstrate how they feel about the north. They're doing their best to eliminate a glimmer of hope for development in the north. I had the pleasure of attending the Meet the Miners conference that was held here at Queen's Park. There, the De Beers representative did his best to be polite in his response to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, but what did he say? He said that this was a Third World taxation policy and that this may be the only diamond mine that ever opens in Ontario because of your broken promise, bringing in another tax—where you triple the tax from 5% to 13%—just as the company is about to open a new diamond mine west of Attawapiskat, giving hope to the First Nations in the area and giving hope to northern Ontario. And what do you do? You squash that hope by tripling the tax right at a critical point so that the De Beers representative said that this may be the only diamond mine that ever opens in northern Ontario.

I've got lots more that I'd like to say, but I've used my time. The north will continue to suffer as long as the province lacks the leadership necessary to make the real decisions and encourage real growth for northern Ontario.

#### ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** I'm happy to join the minister in marking Access Awareness Week in Ontario. I'm very proud that the PC government was the first one to introduce an Ontarians with Disabilities Act in Ontario. No other government had ever before intro-

duced such a bill. I know that all parties in this House are committed to working on behalf of disabled Ontarians.

I would also like to thank all of the organizations across Ontario who work to improve accessibility for Ontarians. Disabled Ontarians themselves deserve our respect for holding government to account over the years as legislation has progressed. The website that the government is introducing today should be helpful to businesses who wish to make their workplaces more accessible for disabled customers and employees. It is a worthy goal to encourage the employment of disabled Ontarians. I encourage all employers to consider hiring a disabled employee.

Just a couple of weeks ago, on Community Living Day, I pointed out the importance of integrating Ontarians with intellectual disabilities. It is just as important to encourage the integration of Ontarians with physical disabilities.

On behalf of John Tory and the PC caucus, I am pleased to mark Access Awareness Week and to commit on behalf of our party to help make our province better for our disabled citizens. Our goal should be a society in which every citizen is able to participate to the best of his or her abilities.

#### NORTHERN ONTARIO GROWTH PLAN

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses? The member for Timmins—James Bay.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins—James Bay):** Well, you're right; it isn't going to be positive, because this government stands here today and says, "Oh, after four years, we've got a plan. We've got a plan for northern Ontario." Where have you been for the last four years? We've had plant closures from northwestern to northeastern Ontario; we've had entire communities lose their only employer—in my riding alone, Smooth Rock Falls and Opasatika—but the story is the same across northeastern Ontario. You say, after four years, on the eve of an election, "We have a plan." Well, if this is a plan, we certainly don't need it, because what we've needed for the last four years was a government to work with us in northern Ontario, to work with the very people that you talked about inside your report—Steve Kidd from the Northeastern Ontario Chamber of Commerce; Tom Laughren, the mayor of Timmins—to work with the labour councils, the forest companies, the diamond industry and others in order to grow jobs in northern Ontario. You can't plan growth in northern Ontario unless you have an increasing population, and we've had a decrease in population in northern Ontario because of the job losses. So you're saying to us, "We have a plan to deal with growth in northern Ontario," at the same time that we've had a decrease in population.

Listen: As a northerner, I want to see growth in northern Ontario like everybody else and I want to see northern Ontario prosper, but the formula that you've been using up to now has been nothing short of a

disaster. What you need to do is address the core issue that affects the forest industry, the mining industry and other industries in northern Ontario in order to put them on a sound footing. What is it? Electricity prices, number one, no question. All of the mayors across the north have been saying, as my leader Howard Hampton has been saying, that this government's failed electricity policies, which were first enacted by the Conservative and then followed by the Liberals, have led to thousands of job losses across northern Ontario. It's not only the north; you look across southern Ontario and it's the same story, but for this particular announcement I'll talk about the north.

You talk about an exciting initiative and then you use the names of people like Mayor Tom Laughren. Don't you remember? He was one of the five mayors who came to Toronto less than a month ago to call on this government to deal seriously with the issues of growth in northern Ontario from the perspective of creating jobs. What did they get? They didn't get the response they needed, and they went back to northern Ontario quite disappointed.

I say to the government across the way: If you want to plan for growth in northern Ontario by way of building new schools, by way of planning new neighbourhoods, you've got to grow the jobs, and this is where this government has failed miserably. If you don't grow the jobs, at the end of the day you can't do any planning.

I look at the issue of diamond mining in northern Ontario. As the member from the Conservative Party was talking about tripling the royalty on the De Beers mine, the minister across the way was yelling and saying, "We're giving the diamonds away to the public." Imagine, if you will, if your policies were to triple the taxes paid by GM while Ford and Chrysler had their taxes stay the same, what the auto industry would say about Ontario. It would be a laughingstock.

You're killing jobs in northern Ontario. Until you guys figure out what you've done wrong, at the end of the day we haven't got a chance. The best chance is to bring on the election, kick the Liberals out and elect New Democrats.

#### ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** In response to the statement by the Minister of Community and Social Services: another day, another website; another day, another day of government inaction. The NDP welcomes any progress made to improve accessibility. However, all this website is is another smoke-screen for your inaction. You've put up a website which costs nearly nothing and you do nothing in respect.

You've quoted here in your speech, and I'd like to quote you: "All of us have a friend or co-worker that has a disability. Some of those disabilities are visible; some are not. But if we are aware of a barrier that keeps our friends or family from participating in activities, we are compelled to remove that barrier."

If only that were true. If only you were removing barriers and not just putting up websites. There are so many issues that you have failed to do. Your own bill will take 20 years to implement. Your own bill, your own budget, has no new initiatives to help the poor. Your own budget has nearly frozen ODSP rates. Your own budget is leaving in the clawback for the children of disabled people. There are so many issues that the Ministry of Community and Social Services is ignoring.

I would like to take a couple—I've only got a few seconds. Mr. Gord Shepherd from Havelock, Ontario, is being discriminated against by this government simply because he is blind. Mr. Shepherd has a car that others drive for him. In the past, when he purchased a car he received a sales tax rebate. This government did away with it. This is just an example of what you do, not what you say—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

#### HOCKEY

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I have a message for the Minister of Tourism from the people of Ottawa that there is still time to join the Ottawa Senators bandwagon. If you could just leave one seat for the Stanley Cup, you're more than welcome to jump on board, Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker: We have only one Ontario team left in the Stanley Cup finals, and naturally I'll be cheering for the Ottawa Senators against the Anaheim Ducks.

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm excited about the Ottawa Senators' chances, but I just want to draw to the attention of this House the other professional Canadian hockey team that's still playing hockey at this time, and that's the Hamilton Bulldogs, who are finalists in the Calder Cup against the Hershey Bears. Go, Bulldogs, go.

1440

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### SCHOOL SAFETY

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Minister of Education and concerns school safety. Last week, I think we were all stunned after hearing about the murder of young Jordan Manners at C.W. Jefferys school in Toronto. I had a chance myself to speak to some of the family members on Saturday and I repeat here the expression of our condolences on their terrible loss and the loss that the community has suffered.

Now parents and teachers and students across Ontario are wondering once again how these senseless acts can



take place. We've seen these tragedies take place in too many places. It's included a church, on Yonge Street and now in one of our schools. The same parents and teachers and kids expect us to work together to deal with these very serious issues of school safety.

On Friday, I wrote a letter to the Premier on school safety. It made some suggestions as to more we might do. I wonder if the minister would agree that there is more to be done to ensure safety in the schools.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** First of all, I just want to say what a great tragedy Jordan's death was. I was able to go to the school the day after the shooting. It's obviously every parent's nightmare that such a thing would happen, and my heart goes out to the family and friends of Jordan.

Of course, there's always more to be done. We received the letter from the member opposite. There are no simple solutions in these situations, and on the issues that the member opposite has raised in terms of supervision and security in schools, calling on the federal government to ban handguns and indeed in terms of increased programming, we have taken action on all of those. I'd happy to elaborate in supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** As the minister said, in the letter I set out a number of things that I thought needed to be done in a number of different areas. We clearly need programs in place for families and children and teachers to prevent crime and in fact divert people away from crime. We need tougher penalties for gun crimes. But I want to take a second to talk about another area of concern, and that is the seemingly slower pace than I think is desirable of getting cameras into schools where a need has been identified.

C.W. Jefferys was on the list of schools that were supposed to get cameras. They requested them in January. They're still waiting, along with about half the schools in Toronto that have been identified as being in need of cameras. This initiative for cameras was announced two Ministers of Education ago. Why haven't this particular school and the others on the waiting list received their cameras as yet? What's holding it up?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** On the issue of cameras, the \$3.4 million that was rolled out to 844 elementary schools in the province, which was the provincial program—all of those schools have their cameras. The program that the member opposite is talking about is actually a local program in Toronto, and the Toronto board has got a priority list. As the member opposite knows, there are some 550 schools in the Toronto District School Board. They have their own capital plans and their own purchasing priorities. So those cameras are being installed in schools according to the local board's initiative.

I just want to respond on the issue of programming. One of the things that I've certainly been concerned about is the summer ahead of us and that there do need to be more programs in our schools. The Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic board released a notice on Friday that they are going to be responding to my request to come up with a proposal for summer

programs so we can get the schools open and get programs into the schools for the summer.

**Mr. Tory:** An article in the Toronto Sun over the weekend by a former teacher described a chaotic situation at C.W. Jefferys well before the tragic events of last week. Across the province we've heard concerns about supervision in the schools. The Ontario Principals' Council has said that there's been a dramatic one-third reduction in supervision time, and the gap is not being filled. The gap would clearly seem to be an issue if we're going to maintain safe schools. At least according to the principals' council, it would seem to be an issue.

This supervision gap is not a new concern. I wonder if the minister can tell us what specific steps she has taken to address it so as to help ensure safe schools in Toronto and across the province?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** We have been working with the Ontario Principals' Council, the teachers' federations and the individual school boards to guarantee that all of our schools have the safest conditions possible. Some 80% of the elementary schools in the province have supervision schedules that have been signed off on by principals, and where there hasn't been a signed-off agreement, the principal's plan is in place. So in fact the principals themselves are the ones who take responsibility for safety in the schools. I am absolutely sure that in C.W. Jefferys and in all our schools around the province the teachers and principals are doing everything they can to make sure that the kids are safe. In fact, when this incident happened, the lockdown procedure that took place was performed absolutely to a T. The teachers were with the students in the school and kept the students safe during those terrifying hours.

## CHILD CARE

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Today we read in the Toronto Star of a serious lapse that has happened on the minister's watch. We learned that in 2005-06 there were 5,814 serious occurrences reported by licensed daycares in Ontario, involving 3,000 injuries, 674 missing-children reports and 675 allegations of abuse. We also learned that the ministry charged with protecting children in daycares has been slow to act even in the worst cases. We further learned that this minister and her department have fought tooth and nail to keep some of this information away from the public. This despite recommendations from the Auditor General on these very issues in his 2005 report, recommendations that the minister committed to implement. The minister and her government made efforts to keep this information under wraps for two years. Why did the minister do that? Will she now acknowledge that the policy should be to make sure that parents know what's going on in daycares across the province, that this information is readily available to them?

**Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services):** I must first correct the



Leader of the Opposition, who blatantly suggests that I knew what was going on and kept this under wraps. That's just not true. There's no question that I take my responsibilities very, very seriously, and I do understand the concept of ministerial responsibility, so I'm not happy with the findings of this investigation by the Toronto Star.

There have been a number of steps taken by my ministry since January 2006 to strengthen the whole process for licensing child care centres. It's obvious that there's more to be done yet, and we are continuing to move in that direction. There's no question that we want children to be safe in our child care centres, that parents deserve to have this comfort level that their children will be safe, and we are going to work even harder to ensure that this is indeed the case.

**Mr. Tory:** We've heard this song before. The Auditor General reported on this some time ago, there was a massive freedom-of-information request filed in respect of all this information that's starting to come out now in the Toronto Star, and the minister would have us believe that she knew nothing. We have seen this before. We've seen it with the lotteries, we've seen it with the slush funds, we've seen it with the mental health of the children on the armed forces base, we've seen it with the Ombudsman's report on that, and we've seen it with the spending abuses uncovered by the Auditor General.

How does the minister explain this? People can go into any restaurant they want and see a sign right in the window telling them whether that restaurant meets the minimum standards or not, but parents sending their kids to daycare are blind when it comes to the quality of care that their kids are receiving. Parents dropping their kids off don't, seemingly, under this administration, have the right to know what kind of care is being given to their kids inside. My question is this: Why don't parents have access to this information, and why did you spend two years trying to keep it from public view when the requests were in? Why did the minister do that?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** The Leader of the Opposition forgets that this investigation actually started with his government. In terms of signs at child care facilities, there are licensing signs on the facility premises and there are different coloured signs depending on whether or not a provisional licence is in effect. There are also pamphlets that parents receive when there's a provisional licence in effect.

Clearly, I would like to acknowledge that there is more to be done. We are working to do more to protect children. Today there are 57 provisional licences in place in 4,450 child care centres in this province.

1450

**Mr. Tory:** The issue once again, as it was with lotteries, as it was with all of these different things we see, is the lack of investigation, the lack of enforcement and the refusal to take problems within these ministries seriously until somebody gets caught. That's where it is. Instead of enforcing the laws, instead of enforcing the minimum standards, provisional licence after provisional

licence is issued. People rely on brochures to tell parents about things that the ministry knows are going on inside these places, but the parents themselves are not entitled to know these things. In fact, the government takes steps to make it difficult for this information to become public. The facts are hidden from the public.

I want to ask the minister very simply: Why have these problems been ignored for such a long period of time, and why is the minister so opposed to the transparency and accountability that would let parents know what is going on inside these places, instead of some canned brochure?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** There is no question that the Leader of the Opposition is being creative. He has his own reasons for presenting this question the way he does, and his reasons are not about getting to the bottom of these issues.

We are, without a doubt, committed to transparency and openness. We have even made changes to the DNA, the Day Nurseries Act, on regulatory modernization, which will allow us to exercise closure on centres that have had provisional licences for more than one kind of complaint. So we are taking several steps.

I would be happy to take more questions on this and to provide more details. A licence and compliance review working group, for example, was established in January 2006—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. New question?

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Today we have more evidence that the McGuinty government is out of touch with hard-working families and their priorities. As the Toronto Stars says, in 2005-06, 3,000 Ontario children were injured at licensed child care centres across this province, and that says nothing about what may be happening at unlicensed child care operations. But the information that this is happening to children should be available to parents. It shouldn't be hidden by the McGuinty government. The Toronto Star shouldn't have to take two years of freedom-of-information delays to find the information either.

My question is this: Why is the McGuinty government trying so hard to hide information that should be available to parents on an everyday basis?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** Once again, I'll repeat that information on provisional licensing is actually available to parents. The brochure is called Attention Parents: "This centre does not meet all the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act." It is available to all parents of children in centres that have been issued provisional licences.

The leader of the third party also suggests that we're trying to hide information. That couldn't be further from the truth. That is certainly not the case, and again, there's a certain amount of creative licence that's going on in this place today.

**Mr. Hampton:** The only creative licence that's going on is with the McGuinty government. A newspaper like



the Toronto Star shouldn't have to go through a two-year process of roadblocks and delays to find out health and safety information about licensed child care centres in Ontario, and parents shouldn't have to wait for that kind of delay either. Some 674 missing-child reports were filed by licensed child care centres, where parents shouldn't have to be concerned about their child's health and safety. Hard-working parents have a right to know this information.

I ask again: Why has the McGuinty government been fighting for two years to try to keep this information from the parents, the children and the families of Ontario, who deserve to know it and who need to know it?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** The fact that these reports are actually being filed illustrates that our ministry has been very committed to ensuring that occurrences are documented. In fact, starting in January 2006, we actually implemented an enhanced serious occurrence reporting process, and every single one of those reports is reviewed by the assistant deputy minister in the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

I should also mention that a missing child report can be prepared—I'll give you one example. A child went across the hallway to the gym without the knowledge of the child care worker. That report was filed just the same, because that worker did not know where that child was. That doesn't mean that it was a problem; it means that we take this very seriously.

**Mr. Hampton:** If the McGuinty government were taking this seriously, this information would be available for parents across this province and not hidden behind a wall of bureaucracy for two years.

Another example: In 2005-06, there were 675 allegations of child abuse or mistreatment at licensed child care centres. Again, that says nothing about what may have been going on at unlicensed, unregulated child care operations. Parents need to know that information as well. But the reality under the McGuinty government is that it seems to take an investigation by the Ombudsman or a discovery by the Auditor General or two years of going through freedom of information roadblocks and delay before the McGuinty government fesses up. I ask again: Why is the McGuinty government trying to keep this information from parents, and when are you going to start making it public without a two-year freedom of information delay?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** The leader of the third party continues to actually provide incorrect information to this House, so let me show him again. This is the brochure. It's called Attention Parents and says, "This centre does not meet all the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act."

We will continue to do more to inform parents as to how they can help us to address issues that they may be concerned about in their centres. Certainly when there is an issue that generates a provisional licence, the reason for the provisional licence will be made very clear to parents. These provisional licences, at this point in time anyway, can be issued twice, each providing for a three-month period in which to correct the issue. What we

would also like to do is to ensure that the provisional licences that we take into consideration can be for a variety of causes, not just for a repeated occurrence.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Hampton:** To the Minister of Children and Youth Services: The minister talks about provisional licences. The reality under the McGuinty government is that you have child care centres operating with provisional licences for months, children potentially at risk for months, and the McGuinty government does nothing. Not only are you trying to keep the information secret, but you're failing on the enforcement side as well.

Again, parents need to know the information and they need to know the information not two years later. I ask the minister again: When is the McGuinty government going to start, as a practice, making this information available immediately instead of forcing parents and people who are interested to go through a two-year freedom of information request to get the information that should be available to parents today?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** The article actually speaks to the overwhelming majority of centres being properly run. We should not forget that. The leader of the third party seems to think that if he continues to repeat incorrect information, that will make that information correct. So let me once again, because he's obviously not paying attention, illustrate that there is in fact a pamphlet that brings to every parent's attention if there is a provisional licence in effect.

1500

**Mr. Hampton:** Minister, the reality for parents out there is that they're so desperate for child care spaces that even where they may know that the child care centre where their child is has problems, they don't want to come forward and say anything, yet they're finding out they can't rely on the McGuinty government either. You don't enforce and you try to hide the information that parents need.

You talked a minute ago about reports that are being filed. If you're serious about doing something, will you table those reports here and now, today, so that we won't have to go through another freedom of information request in two years to get the information that parents should have today? Will you table the reports that you've been referring to?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** The fact is that all of that information is available. It is available.

With regard to the McGuinty government's attitude towards child care facilities that are not functioning properly, I would like to suggest that the member and his colleagues, and in fact members of the official opposition, might want to remember that it was our government that shut down a child care centre just a matter of a few weeks ago, in spite of the fact that some parents said they were very satisfied with that centre. We found that that centre was in fact not abiding by the expectations of our licensing requirements. We shut it down.

**Mr. Hampton:** Minister, your government was forced by public outcry to shut down a centre that was an un-



licensed and unregulated centre because children were at risk. That wasn't any action of your own; that was public disclosure.

I remember that only three and a half years ago Dalton McGuinty promised \$300 million of new provincial money to be invested in child care. Here we are, almost four years later: The situation, as the *Toronto Star* discloses, is more desperate than ever; parents are more desperate than ever to have access to child care. Can the minister tell us what happened to the promised \$300 million of new provincial money? Because we haven't seen it yet.

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** It was the NDP government that cut child care spaces in this province. In our first year of the child care agreement, we increased the number of child care spaces in this province by almost 15,000—a substantial increase, well beyond the expectations of anyone in—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** I'm having difficulty hearing the minister.

Minister.

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** Thank you, Speaker. I was just reminiscing on the change in attitude of the NDP, which had cut child care spaces in this province when in fact in one year alone our government increased the number of child care spaces by almost 15,000 across this province.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Tory:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services, on the same subject. The minister stood in her place this afternoon and corrected me when I said she knew about these circumstances for months, if not years. She claims she didn't. She keeps showing us this brochure, which is a poor substitute for a foreign concept for the McGuinty government. How about actually making the information available, on the Internet and elsewhere, to the parents so they can judge for themselves what is going on in the places where they leave their children?

I want to know from the minister: At what point in the two-year stonewalling campaign did the minister know the *Toronto Star* was seeking this information, and why didn't she simply instruct her officials at that time to make the information available to them—and to parents, by the way—instead of dragging it out for two years? At what point did she know?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** I'm very happy to respond to that question. The minister, as in "I," knew about the *Toronto Star*'s request on Thursday of last week.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** Deal with that. That's the answer to the question. I'm sure it's not what you were hoping for, but that's in fact the answer to the question.

**Mr. Tory:** Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that it is inconceivable that in all the meetings and in all the briefings that have ever taken place there's been no reference whatsoever at any time before last Thursday—over a period of two years, which I gather involved a court case as well—that you would know anything about this. It's

unbelievable. Parents should be appalled at this kind of performance.

I'll ask the minister to bring to the House the memos, the briefing notes and the schedules of all the things that went on, all the interaction between the minister and her officials. And I'll ask her this as well: On a go-forward basis, will she agree to tell the public that she will make this information readily available to the public and the media so they don't have to go through this two years of stonewalling that the minister seemed to know nothing about in order to get basic information on how kids are being looked after in this province?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** The member's exact question was, "When did the minister know about the *Toronto Star* investigation?" I have answered his question. He doesn't like the answer, but that's not my problem. I have answered his question.

As I have said—and he should actually be aware of the freedom of information process—the freedom of information process is supposed to be separate and apart from the political process. Something tells me he knows that, but he really just does not want to acknowledge that.

There is no question that there is more to be done. Yes, in fact a website is in the works. They don't typically like websites, from how they react to what we say, but a website is in fact under development, and parents will have that opportunity as well. The brochures that parents receive also provide a telephone number for my ministry, a telephone number whereby they will be able to find the number for the regional office in their area, which they can actually find from our current website as well.

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** To the Attorney General: The McGuinty government says it's committed to transparency, but it really seems to have a serious secrecy addiction. It drags its feet, indeed resists efforts by families to get information about their children's child care. The Attorney General wins a Code of Silence Award from journalists across the country, but on Friday Ontario's Court of Appeal ruled that the freedom of information act violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Will the Attorney General commit today to comply with the ruling of the Ontario Court of Appeal and not in fact delay matters by appealing their decision?

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** The member refers to the Canadian Journalism Association, which had me appear before them on Friday so that we could discuss the changes that have been made at the behest of the Panel on Justice and the Media recommendations—17 recommendations. We asked for the justice and media panel's recommendations because we feel that our justice system is very much ready for its close-up. We announced at that time that we had cut in half the fees that are being charged for photocopying in our courts and that we've reduced by more than 69% the cost of inspection fees, as well as complying with a



number of recommendations, including bringing cameras into the Ontario Court of Appeal through a pilot project that Chief Justice McMurtry agreed to. So we have actually unprecedented transparency and accountability in our justice system, and I'm happy to talk about more of this in a supplementary.

**Mr. Kormos:** Maybe I just should have congratulated the Attorney General on winning the Code of Silence Award. But public information isn't the property of Dalton McGuinty or his cabinet. If the McGuinty government knows that a licensed child care centre is unsafe, they shouldn't hide that information from parents with children in those centres. Unfortunately, the McGuinty government appears to be incapable of transparency, openness or accountability.

But now the Ontario Court of Appeal has given this government an opportunity—that is, by having ruled section 23's omission of sections 14 and 19 unconstitutional. I ask the Attorney General whether he will assure us that he won't waste any more public money by appealing this but in fact will accept this very, very responsible judgment and proceed with its application.

1510

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** Former Attorney General Howard Hampton I'm sure has already told Mr. Kormos that in the ordinary course of business, ministry counsel will review decisions of this nature and will act in the public interest, and I expect that will continue. He will be familiar, because he brought judicial reviews of freedom of information and inquiry findings. Mr. Hampton used to do that about five times a year when they were in government and he was the Attorney General. When FOI requests were made and the NDP government didn't like it, Howard Hampton would appeal those decisions. That's what the NDP government did. To a large degree, the Ministry of the Attorney General continues to act in the public interest in this regard.

I'd certainly like to compare the effort that was made by the NDP when they were in government to the effort being made by the McGuinty government. The Information and Privacy Commissioner has praised the McGuinty government's initiative to usher in a new era of openness and called our response rate achievement "outstanding."

#### ELECTORAL REFORM

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge):** In 2007 the federal government introduced Bill C-56, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (Democratic representation), in the House of Commons. In 2006, the Conservative Party platform committed to "Restore representation by population for Ontario, British Columbia, and Alberta in the House of Commons while protecting the seat counts of smaller provinces." Unfortunately, while it solved the under-representation for Alberta and British Columbia, the federal government's new legislation fails to honour its commitment to representation for Ontario. Through you, Mr. Speaker, to

the minister responsible for democratic renewal: What does this mean for Ontario?

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** Thank you to the member from Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge. The good news is that the federal government says it wants to improve representation for all Canadians in the House of Commons. The bad news is that the proposal they came up with doesn't treat Ontarians fairly. The new legislation increases the number of seats for British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario, but caps the number of increased seats for Ontario and only Ontario. Despite the fact that Ontario—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The member for Lanark–Carleton and the Minister for Public Infrastructure Renewal: If you wish to discuss this privately, be my guest.

Minister?

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** I don't know what the member opposite has against the north, but he should really listen to the answer.

Despite the fact that Ontario will gain additional seats, these will not be sufficient to keep pace with our population growth. People in Ontario will be the only Canadians who do not benefit from the very basic principle of representation by population in the House of Commons. Both Alberta and BC are projected to get a new seat after 2011 for every increase of approximately 100,000 people, and Ontario would only receive one new seat for every 200,000 people. People in Ontario will be more under-represented when Bill C-56 is implemented than they are now.

The federal government should keep its promise to the people of Ontario by amending Bill C-56 to provide Canadians living in Ontario with the same treatment as Canadians living in Alberta and British Columbia. It's a very simple amendment to make.

**Mr. Arthurs:** Over the weekend, I had the opportunity to read a number of articles and editorials about this particular issue. Despite the unfortunate silence that has occurred on this issue from Ontario Conservative MPs, many people are recognizing how unfair C-56 is to the province of Ontario. It's rare to see the Toronto Star, the Globe and Mail, the Montreal Gazette and the National Post all agree on the same issue, but editorials and columnists in all of those papers have spoken out in support of Premier McGuinty's position. Among those quotes, yesterday's Toronto Star notes, "The Conservatives' new approach shortchanges Ontario rather noticeably." I'd like to ask the minister what we can do as MPPs to help show the Harper government the errors of their ways.

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** I'd like to thank the member again for his attention to this issue. I read with great interest many of the same articles that he did over the past week. In fact, let me draw the attention of the House to a couple of other quotes. A Globe and Mail editorial from May 19, 2007, states that what is not clear



from the bill is why Ontarians' votes should be worth less than the votes of all other Canadians. We believe that all Canadians should have an equal say in who will govern the country. As the *Star* noted yesterday, "This is not a partisan issue. It affects every Ontario resident, who is in effect being discriminated against by the federal government."

The Premier has introduced a motion calling on all MPPs and MPs to stand up for the people of Ontario by asking the federal government to amend Bill C-56. Speaker, I ask if you could stop the question period clock and seek unanimous consent to move and vote on the following motion without debate:

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario supports Premier McGuinty's call for all Ontario leaders—including MPPs and MPs—to stand up for Ontario by calling on the federal Tory government to amend its unfair legislation that discriminates against Ontario in the House of Commons.

**The Speaker:** Mrs. Bountrogianni has asked for unanimous consent to stop the question period clock to put the motion. Agreed? I heard a no.

#### CHILD CARE

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean–Carleton):** To the Minister of Children and Youth Services: Several months ago, the Auditor General made us and you aware of the serious abuses in Ontario's children's aid societies. At the time, the minister was slow to act. You'll also recall earlier this spring when the Ombudsman was called in to intervene on behalf of children and youth at the Phoenix Centre in Petawawa, to stand up on their behalf. Now we have further reports of the McGuinty government's apathy towards the well-being and safety of Ontario's children as outlined on the front page of today's *Toronto Star*. It appears that this apathy is becoming systemic, and the pattern of behaviour.

Will the minister please tell this House when she was first aware of these repeated abuses in Ontario's daycares, why she didn't immediately stop the abuses and, finally, why the information was suppressed and kept hidden from Ontario's parents for at least a year and a half?

**Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services):** There is no question: The health and well-being of children in our child care facilities are absolutely not to be compromised. So what I read in the *Toronto Star* today is unacceptable—it's unacceptable—and I'm working with my ministry to ensure that all of these situations are investigated further and that we strengthen the steps we have already started to take to ensure that the licensing processes and practices are in fact serving our children and their parents well.

The article also indicates that the overwhelming majority of centres are in fact meeting all standards. Over the last three years, our government has hired more

inspectors to monitor our child care facilities—in fact, an 18% increase in inspectors since 2004. Over the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Ms. MacLeod:** How can parents like me in this province who have children under the age of six in daycare be confident with this minister? She knew of problems identified to the Auditor General in 2005. She knew of the massive *Toronto Star* request for information made a year and a half ago.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Stop the clock. Order. When a member is placing a question, that is the only member who is entitled to speak. I need to be able to hear the question.

1520

**Ms. MacLeod:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The minister knew of the problems identified by the Auditor General in 2005, she knew of the massive *Toronto Star* request for information over a year and a half ago, and she knew of the update being given in the public accounts committee this past March. Yet it appears that yet again she did nothing but deny and delay access to information. Why did she go to such lengths to prevent this information from getting out to the public and into the hands of parents with small children? She doesn't think parents are entitled to it. Is her answer to parents today simply, "File an information request if you want to find out about a daycare in the city of Toronto or anywhere else in the province of Ontario"?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** Today there are 57 provisional licences in place. This is across 4,450 child care centres in this province. I take very seriously the allegations revealed in the *Toronto Star* article. My ministry takes very seriously the allegations revealed in the *Toronto Star* article. We have actually been conducting unannounced inspections in addition to the annual reviews that we conduct of every single licensed centre. We know that we can always do more—and we will do more—but right now every single one of those centres that has a provisional licence has that information posted and is required to provide parents with information to that effect.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** My question is for the Minister of the Environment. Last week, cities like Toronto, London, Hamilton, Waterloo and Windsor were ordered to test for lead in tap water. Unfortunately, the approach of this minister falls short of standards in other jurisdictions like the United States. In the US, the Environmental Protection Agency has required monitoring of drinking water from the tap, looking for lead, for over a decade. Will this minister mandate ongoing tap water testing in order to protect Ontarians from unsafe levels of lead in their drinking water—ongoing testing?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** It is my primary responsibility to protect the



health and safety of all Ontarians, and those are exactly the steps that we're taking at the Ministry of the Environment. When we first learned about the circumstances in London, we took immediate and decisive action, and engaged and worked side by side with the community of London to get to the bottom of their water chemistry issue. We talked about ensuring that we retain world experts to come together to look at the unusual circumstances in London. We assured ourselves that there were enough various types of testing available. We used our labs to undertake that testing. We wanted to assure ourselves that residents, especially that vulnerable population, were informed about the circumstances. That's why I engaged with the London media and gave a number of interviews to raise the profile of this issue. At the same time, the North American experts will be reporting to me to ensure that we get to the bottom of this critical issue in London and beyond.

**Mr. Tabuns:** That was a wholly unsatisfactory answer. The question is whether or not the minister will, on an ongoing basis, protect people from lead in their water in this province. We know what the impacts of lead are on pregnant women and young children. When the minister gets caught, when things blow up, then there's a flurry of action. But the question is not just the flurry of action; the question is: Will there be mandatory ongoing testing of water at the tap for lead? That's the issue, that's the question and that's what has to be addressed by the minister. Will she mandate ongoing testing at the tap for lead?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** I would encourage my friend opposite to pay close attention to the actions being taken by our government. We are not waiting; we have now issued orders to 36 municipalities across this province to test their water at their tap.

My friend opposite knows well that this is an unusual circumstance unknown to North American experts, to the chief drinking water inspector and to communities right across North America. It is complicated, I know. It has to do with the water chemistry, and standard protocols in use for many years are not resulting in us having the satisfaction that communities are safe.

We have undertaken specific efforts in London. We have asked all municipalities to undertake that water testing. We await those results; they will be returned to us very promptly. I have issued protocols and asked for our water experts to provide us with their advice. It is that advice of water experts from North America, of the chief medical officer and of the chief drinking water inspector that I will listen to, because this is an important issue for the health and safety of this province. We will get to the bottom of this.

#### HEALTH CARE

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce):** To the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care: In the last three and a half years, I have heard time and time again from my constituents about access to health care services. In

my riding—it covers a very large geographical area—we have eight hospitals and seven family health teams to serve my many constituents. Right now, no less than three of my hospitals have received planning and design grants to revamp their structures. This is a total of \$2.1 million, and that's being used to develop plans and needs for the hospitals in Exeter, Kincardine and Wingham. I ask this minister in this House: Will you acknowledge the need to redevelop these hospitals?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Indeed, planning and design grants for hospitals in Exeter, Kincardine and Wingham signal that these hospitals have a bright future, something that wasn't so certain in the province of Ontario. We continue to build on our record of renewal and transformation. My colleague the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal has ensured that in five years Ontario will see more renewal of its hospital stock than under the last five governments combined.

I contrast that record with Mr. John Tory's. In trying to hide his agenda, he has unmasked, with respect to health care, that he's not too good at math. Unflattering editorials in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Sudbury Star*, the *Toronto Star* and the *Cornwall Standard-Freeholder* all give rise to serious concerns about Mr. Tory's agenda and his math skills. Those editorials had headings such as "Promise Hard to Accept" and "Unhealthy Calculations."

**Mrs. Mitchell:** Minister, I tell you, I hope for the sake of the five hospitals in my riding, which were on the chopping block when the previous government was in office, that they will not count as waste this time around. As the population ages, and especially in a rural riding such as mine, it's vitally important to the people that they can access their health care services as close to home as possible. If those five hospitals had been closed, as was the government's intention at that time, those communities would have been forced to travel great distances to receive just basic health care. Minister, how are you planning to bring more health services to the people in remote and rural communities?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** We know that more than 20 hospitals and communities across the province of Ontario suffered that fate after hearing promises from the then leader of the Conservative Party about no cuts to hospitals.

You mentioned the seven family health teams. I think it's very noteworthy that to date, through the evolution of those seven family health teams, 2,500 additional patients are receiving care. These are patients who did not previously have access to a family doctor. These are the same kinds of programs that would be under the threat of being cut if the Conservatives regained the opportunity, because it's the same story, just a different Tory. I quote from the *Common Sense Revolution*: "That means setting priorities, cutting out fat and waste, and putting people first." Now for Mr. Tory's speech last week: "I believe we can manage our system better, we can eliminate waste and we can drive dollars to patient care." I



think Ontarians well know that as this party goes, it's Tory, Tory, same old story.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. The member for Niagara Centre will come to order.

1530

### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Minister of the Environment, and it concerns the lead being found in the water of communities across Ontario. We first heard about the high levels of lead in London over a month ago. At that time, the minister's immediate and decisive action, to use her words, was to tell people to flush the pipes and ask the stores if they'd keep some filters in stock. Then one of her officials wrote a memo to the municipalities recommending testing, but they kept the letter under wraps. Again, immediate and decisive action to cover up, just like we've seen with the child care centres. Finally the ministry ordered minimal testing after pressure from the London Free Press and from the Hamilton Spectator and today from the Osprey newspapers.

To the minister: Why the reluctance to act? Why the reluctance to share this information with the public by sending a letter out to municipalities and not making it available to the public?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I would urge the Leader of the Opposition to find his new-found interest in water and take it seriously because, to be clear, let me tell you about the actions that have been taken by this government. Five weeks ago we learned that a Canadian standard of flushing your lead pipes for five minutes was not keeping Ontarians in London as safe and healthy as we wanted that to be. We immediately engaged with the community of London to ensure that there was sufficient treatment capacity available so that they could treat the water in their homes. We engaged North American experts to join with us, to join with the chief drinking water inspector, to work with us to help find a solution to this very complicated water chemistry pH level issue in London.

As a result of the actions that we've taken, I can tell you that we have quickly posted a new protocol on the Environmental Bill of Rights. I have engaged with the federal government to get them to take action on their new standard, and we continue to work—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** The very five-minute flushing test the minister just said was the Canadian standard and was not keeping people safe is the very test that her chief water inspector has ordered in the province. They're only testing 20 homes in each of the cities that are the subject of the water inspector's letter, and the tests specifically contemplate running the water first for five minutes

before the water is taken for the test. Who in heaven's name runs the water for five minutes in real life before they take a drink or brush their teeth? And she has just said that that standard is not protecting people adequately.

What we want to know is this: the cost of doing this properly. The North American experts the minister referred to say that 100 homes is the minimum number of homes you'd want to test. Why doesn't the minister instruct that the test should be done immediately when the tap is turned on, not after this ridiculous five-minute period of time? Will the minister do the right thing, order the tests to be done properly, order them to be done in a reasonable number of homes and just get on with protecting the public interest?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** You can be absolutely certain that I will take no advice as to protecting Ontarian's drinking water from the Leader of the Opposition and the legacy that his party has left us. They voted against the Clean Water Act. They don't understand the Canada-wide standard with respect to ensuring that communities are safe and that their drinking water is clean and pure.

The tests that we are undertaking in 36 communities across the province will allow us to understand how widespread this problem is, and then we will take action by taking advice from the chief drinking water inspector, the chief medical officer himself and the world-renowned experts that we have engaged to help us with this problem.

Lastly, I want to tell you that folks who know about drinking water—Robert Walton, Oxford county's public works director, says that the Ontario Drinking Water Advisory Council is working at rocket speed. It sounds like the Ministry of the Environment has done the right thing, doing a survey across Ontario to see how extensive the problem is.

We are taking action. We will—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

### HOME WARRANTY PROGRAM

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York):** My question is to the Minister of Government Services. Mr. Minister, this morning representatives from Canadians for Properly Built Homes were at Queen's Park to raise very serious concerns about the government services ministry and the Tarion Warranty Corp. Tarion is supposed to be responsible for protecting the rights of new home buyers and regulating those who build new homes. But countless new homeowners have purchased faulty homes and faulty houses, and the corporation has ignored their pleas for help. The minister has also ignored their pleas over these many months. Can the minister please explain why he has refused to answer their queries and, more importantly, why Ontario is the only province to let an arm's-length organization manage the home building industry?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** Of course the warranty program is extremely



important to homeowners, and we take it very seriously. This is a corporation that really started the home warranty program in Canada, and we are constantly looking at how we can improve it. It was, I think, about three years ago that we put four new members on the board to represent the consumer. We have an agreement with the board to add an additional member very shortly. The warranty corporation has, I think, doubled the warranty program from \$150,000 to \$300,000. They put some strict guidelines on how quickly they deal with them. I would just say to the member that I'm determined to continue to look for ways we can improve this program. I would also say that I think there are 400,000 people under warranty right now, and unfortunately we do have a few challenges with the warranty program, and I constantly look for ways we can improve that.

**Mr. Prue:** Mr. Minister, in the audience today we have people who are very dissatisfied. We have people who have not been responded to by you or by your ministry. We have people who are not satisfied with Tarion. We have people who have been forced to go to court and who potentially may lose their homes. The minister should be taking the concerns far more seriously than he has in the past. He should be protecting new homeowners from faulty, disreputable builders. No one wants to hear his excuses; they want leadership. The minister must tell the thousands of new homeowners who have been ripped off and who have been—I use the word advisedly—lied to by Tarion Corp. and by the home builders that he will do something to help.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** You might want to rephrase that.

**Mr. Prue:** Tarion Corp has been less than honest with those people who have bought houses. Will the minister use his power to tell this House today that he will establish clear guidelines that will protect consumers and force his Tarion Corp.—

**The Speaker:** Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** Let me just assure the public that I do take very seriously the comments. I think I've corresponded with some of these people, individuals, 30 or 40 times in the last year and a half. I take all of their issues seriously. I would just say to the member that I'd be very careful about the language you use in dealing with firms in this province that are reputable firms, dealing on a reputable basis. Again I would just say to the people in the gallery, when you say we haven't—I think I corresponded with one of them 30 times in the last year. We take them seriously. We are making improvements. Just recently, one of the huge issues was with something called delayed closings. We've had a major study done on it, and we are taking action on it. So I want to assure the public and the members in the gallery that I listen carefully to their concerns. We will continue to work to find solutions to those problems.

#### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. John Milloy (Kitchener Centre):** My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

As I'm sure members are aware, there was a large demonstration in Windsor over the weekend to address the need for government assistance in helping to stem the loss of jobs in the manufacturing sector. In fact, I had the opportunity to attend a town hall in my own community last Wednesday night. I simply want to ask the minister a very straightforward question: Can she clarify for the Legislature the extent to which our government is acknowledging the challenges facing this important sector and the way in which we are working to try to assist it?

1540

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues):** I was very pleased to see the participation of the member from Kitchener Centre as well, who is a huge supporter not just of the manufacturing sector but of people who work all over his riding.

I'm very happy to report our own participation this past Sunday in the rally in Windsor by the leadership of the CAW. Let me just take a moment to quote Buzz Hargrove, who said very clearly, "McGuinty's done more for the auto industry than anyone else in the country." I think what's really important to note is that—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** I'm with Buzz, quite frankly. I realize that there are members who opposite who aren't with Buzz. I, on the other hand, am. We believe in a partnership, and I think that what these rallies are expressing is a partnership between the CAW for certain and the Ontario government. We want the feds at the table, and I'm happy to see that this member, who is very busy working for his constituents, is calling on the feds for support as well.

**Mr. Milloy:** I want to thank the minister for her leadership on this issue. As she points out, there are other factors at work which apply to the federal government. Globalization and the fact that our dollar hit a 30-year high on Friday are issues that are beyond the control of this Legislature. It seems to me that there's much more the federal government could be doing to address the problems of the sector. I want to ask the minister: How is the McGuinty government pressing the federal government to come up with a plan to help this situation?

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** We know we have a track record, and that gives us ample opportunity to actually talk to our federal colleagues. I'm sure there are many opposite who have a good working relationship with their colleagues in Ottawa, and they could actually be quite helpful. I would encourage you to pick up the phone or, in some cases, over dinner one night just have a conversation. We're looking for support for our auto sector and we want the federal government at the table.

We've come to the table with a half-billion-dollar fund for the auto investment strategy. That has tabled \$7 billion in our jurisdiction. No other jurisdiction in North America has seen this level of investment. But we need more help. We recognize the challenges and we expect our federal government to be right there with us, all

hands on deck, for our manufacturing sector. We're insisting on it. We have good ideas. We can bring people to Ontario, but we need the federal government to help. I would encourage every member of this House to chat with their federal colleagues. We want them at the table with the Ontario government.

## PETITIONS

### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the proposed Long-Term Care Homes Act is extremely lengthy and complex and requires full and extensive parliamentary and public debate and committee hearings throughout the province; and

"Whereas the rigid, pervasive and detailed framework proposed is excessive and will stifle innovation and flexibility in the long-term-care sector; and

"Whereas the additional burden, red tape and punitive measures imposed by the proposed legislation will aggravate ... the chronic underfunding of the sector, to the detriment of residents of the homes; and

"Whereas the proposed legislation will have serious implications for the viability of the for-profit and not-for-profit, charitable and municipal long-term-care sectors;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We demand that the McGuinty government withdraw the proposed act, or remove the offending sections, and fulfill its commitment by a substantial increase in funding on a multi-year basis in the order of the promised \$6,000 per resident, per year."

I've also signed this.

### NON-PROFIT HOUSING

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South-Weston):** I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of the 164,000 Torontonians who live in Toronto Community Housing buildings.

"Whereas every citizen of Ontario should have a safe, healthy and decent home; and

"Whereas thousands of individuals and families are denied this basic right when the province of Ontario downloaded affordable housing to the city of Toronto but refused to pay for the hundreds of millions of dollars in deferred capital repairs; and

"Whereas poor living conditions undermine the safety and security of communities, harming children, youth and families living in affordable homes; and

"Whereas failure to invest in good repair undermines the values of the province's affordable housing as the condition of the housing stock deteriorates; and

"Whereas poor living conditions have a damaging impact on the health of communities, costing Ontarians millions in health costs; and

"Whereas investment in housing pays off in better residences and in stronger, safer ... communities; and

"Whereas residents of Toronto Community Housing have waited five years for the province to pay its bills and bring affordable housing to a state of good repair;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"Accept its responsibilities and invest \$300 million to ensure that all residents of Toronto Community Housing have a safe, decent and healthy home."

I agree with the petition and hand it to page Grant.

### ROUTE 17

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** J'ai une pétition de 220 noms qui proviennent de la ville de Rockland.

« À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu que l'ancien gouvernement de l'Ontario a transféré la responsabilité de la route 17 aux municipalités, la ville d'Ottawa et des comtés unis de Prescott et Russell;

« Attendu que les municipalités n'ont pas les fonds suffisants pour l'entretien, la réfection de la route ou des ponts, sans mentionner d'élargissement;

« Attendu qu'en 2001, l'administration des comtés unis de Prescott et Russell a estimé à 21 000 véhicules par jour la circulation en semaine sur la 17 à l'entrée de la cité Clarence-Rockland et que depuis, ce chiffre a augmenté à 25 000;

« Attendu que cette artère principale transférée aux municipalités est une route transcanadienne dans un état lamentable et continue à souffrir du temps et de l'achalandage de plus en plus important;

« Attendu que les membres du personnel du MTO régional avaient recommandé et accepté tel que présenté par la commission de révision régionale en date du 27 avril 1992 que la route 17 soit retenue comme une route collectrice provinciale suivant l'achèvement de la route 417;

« Attendu que la ville d'Ottawa continue à émettre des permis de construire, ce qui devient une question de sécurité;

« Attendu que la population de l'est de l'Ontario exige les mêmes services de sécurité routière;

« Nous, soussignés, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Nous demandons au ministère des Transports de l'Ontario de reprendre immédiatement la responsabilité de la route 17/174 et de procéder à son élargissement de la cité Clarence-Rockland à la ville d'Ottawa. »

J'y ajoute ma signature.

### LAKERIDGE HEALTH

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I have a petition that reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:



"Whereas Lakeridge Health should receive full funding to properly implement patient services in the community; and

"Whereas Lakeridge Health is currently facing an \$8-million shortfall as a result of government directives; and

"Whereas Lakeridge Health ranks among the best 25% of hospitals in efficiency performance even when compared to single-site hospitals; and

"Whereas this shortfall would negatively affect many vital programs, including the mental health program, crisis intervention services and addiction treatment services at Lakeridge Health;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to provide long-term fair operating funding for the important health care services of Lakeridge Health and immediately fully fund the current \$8-million shortfall."

I affix my name in support.

#### ANTI-IDLING BYLAWS

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot):** I have a petition from a high school group known as SAVE, Students Against Violating the Environment, largely from the Waterdown area.

"To the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the fact that idling of cars is a major contributor to climate change, poor air quality and a waste of valuable resources—action should be taken by the Parliament of Ontario against it;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Be it resolved that the provincial government, through the Ministry of the Environment, immediately initiate discussion with its municipal partners, ideally through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, so as to move beyond the patchwork quilt of existing and important municipal anti-idling bylaws to a provincially generic piece of legislation with enforcement mechanisms that can be universally applied across the entire province."

I give it to page Shea.

#### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** These petitions from Dunnville, collected by Dianne Scott, indicate, as in the title, "Rural Ontario Needs Transit Support Too."

"Whereas public transit services in the communities of Haldimand and Norfolk counties have declined to the point of virtual non-existence;

"Whereas people in these communities require bus service just as much as those in urban areas to access medical services, get to appointments in nearby towns and visit family; and

"Whereas the communities in Haldimand and Norfolk counties have received no substantial money to support

any form of public transit from the provincial government; and

"Whereas the McGuinty government has allocated a two-cents-a-litre gas tax initiative to support public transportation in urban areas of the province; and

"Whereas, despite paying into the province's two-cents-a-litre gas tax initiative, residents of rural municipalities like Haldimand and Norfolk counties are effectively shut out of this growing source of cash support for transit;

"We, the undersigned, ask the Ontario government to investigate the establishment of connecting public transit links between Haldimand county and Norfolk county communities and outlying municipalities, as well as to establish a mechanism to ensure rural municipalities receive the full benefit of the gas tax transit initiative."

I agree with these people who have signed the petitions and affix my signature.

1550

#### GTA POOLING

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** "End GTA Pooling: Pass Ontario Budget

"Whereas the city of Mississauga faces a long-term labour shortage, resulting in some 60,000 more people commuting into the city of Mississauga than leave Mississauga to earn their living and support their families each and every day; and

"Whereas 10 years ago the Ontario government of that day introduced the concept of GTA pooling, whereby funds are taken from the municipalities surrounding the city of Toronto and channelled into the city of Toronto without benefit or accountability to the taxpayers of those fast-growing cities, which face big-city needs and issues of their own; and

"Whereas GTA pooling places an additional tax burden on the municipal property tax bases of some \$40 million each and every year to the city of Mississauga; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario in its 2007-08 budget proposes to completely eliminate GTA pooling during a seven-year span beginning in fiscal year 2007-08, and that, as pooling is phased out, Ontario will take responsibility for social assistance and social housing costs currently funded by GTA pooling;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That all parties within the government of Ontario support the swift passage of the 2007-08 Ontario budget and ensure that its provisions ending GTA pooling are implemented."

I support this petition and put my signature on it.

#### DOCTOR SHORTAGE

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I have a petition to do with doctor shortages in Muskoka, with

hundreds of signatures from the Gravenhurst area in particular. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we, the undersigned, are very concerned about the doctor shortage in Muskoka;

"Whereas, without increased funding for the Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare Centre, the administration will not be able to keep it as a full-service hospital;

"Whereas, without a full-service hospital in our area, we will be unable to attract doctors; and

"Whereas Muskoka has a higher-than-average percentage of 'senior' citizens; it is of great concern that we attract more doctors."

I support this petition.

#### PARENTING EDUCATION

**Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale):** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas effective parenting practices do not come instinctively and parenting is our most crucial social role, parenting and human development courses need to be taught to all secondary school students. Parenting education will: reduce teen pregnancies; reduce the rate of costly fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and increase the number of healthy pregnancies; reduce the number of costly social problems related to ineffective parenting practices; and improve the 'social fabric' of Ontario to create a more civil society. Parenting education for students is considered to be socially valuable by a majority of adults of voting age and should be included as a mandatory credit course within the Ontario curriculum;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the requirements for the Ontario secondary school diploma to include one senior level ... credit course in parenting education (students to select one of: living and working with children...; parenting...; issues in human growth and development...; or parenting and human development...) as a compulsory credit."

I agree with the petitioners, so I put my signature on the petition as well.

#### MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION OFFICE

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln):** I'm pleased to present a petition to reopen the Grimsby MTO office. I want to thank Lynn Vanderplaats for her hard work in gathering hundreds of signatures. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Grimsby is a growing community with an increasing demand for government services; and

"Whereas people want and deserve to have a real person providing friendly and knowledgeable assistance to citizens rather than a computer terminal; and

"Whereas the Dalton McGuinty government doubled fees for drivers' licences, meaning Grimsby residents are paying more but could be receiving less in services;

"We, the undersigned, request as follows:

"That the McGuinty government immediately seek to find a permanent operator for the Grimsby MTO office to provide in-person, friendly customer service to the people of Grimsby; and

"Furthermore, that the McGuinty government should accelerate this process and reopen the MTO office without any further delay."

My signature in support.

#### LABORATORY SERVICES

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I have a petition to do with health care funding in Muskoka. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the residents of the communities served by Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare ... wish to maintain current community lab services; and

"Whereas maintaining community lab services promotes physician retention and benefits family health teams; and

"Whereas the funding for community lab services is currently a strain on the operating budget of" Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare; and

"Whereas demand for health services is expected to continue to rise with a growing retirement population in Muskoka-East Parry Sound; and

"Whereas the operating budget for" Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare "needs to reflect the growing demand for service in the communities of Muskoka-East Parry Sound;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the McGuinty government and the Minister of Health increase the operating budget of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare to permit continued operation of community lab services."

I support this petition.

#### MACULAR DEGENERATION

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government of Ontario's health insurance plan covers treatments for one form of macular degeneration (wet), and there are other forms of macular degeneration (dry)"—Stargardt—"that are not covered,

"Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the government of Ontario as follows:

"There are thousands of Ontarians who suffer from macular degeneration, resulting in loss of sight if treatment is not pursued. Treatment costs for this disease are astronomical for most individuals and add a financial burden to their lives. Their only alternative is loss of sight. We believe the government of Ontario should cover treatment for all forms of macular degeneration through the Ontario health insurance program."



I affix my name in full support.

### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I have another petition to do with health services in Parry–Sound Muskoka, and it reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas demand for health services is expected to continue to rise with a growing retirement population in Muskoka-East Parry Sound; and

“Whereas studies indicate that overcrowded emergency rooms result in higher mortality rates; and

“Whereas growing demand and lack of availability of long-term-care beds place increased pressure on acute care beds; and

“Whereas the operating budget for” Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare “must reflect the growing demand for service in the communities of Muskoka-East Parry Sound;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the McGuinty government and the Minister of Health provide adequate increases in the operating budget of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare to maintain current health services for the people of Muskoka-East Parry Sound and allocate more long-term-care beds for Muskoka-East Parry Sound.”

I support this petition.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### HEALTH SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR L'AMÉLIORATION DU SYSTÈME DE SANTÉ

Mr. Smitherman moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 171, An Act to improve health systems by amending or repealing various enactments and enacting certain Acts / Projet de loi 171, Loi visant à améliorer les systèmes de santé en modifiant ou en abrogeant divers textes de loi et en édictant certaines lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Mr. Smitherman?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I want to say what a privilege it is and that I will be sharing my time with the excellent member from Mississauga East. I want to thank him for the work he's done on helping to give steerage to this bill.

Bill 171 is a bill that I am enormously proud of. I must say that, as the longest-serving Minister of Health in the province of Ontario since Medicare—I'm long-serving; that makes all of you long-suffering—I'm very privileged

to have a chance to bring to third reading debate the 10th bill I have had the privilege to bring in as minister.

1600

This bill is the culmination of an enormous body of work that was influenced by a dramatically large, impressive and powerful cross-section of stakeholders and folks who are out there to try and help influence positively the health care system that we have in the province of Ontario.

I want to welcome many groups to the Legislature today. First and foremost, I want to welcome the McEachern family. I know that we've had a chance in this House before to speak somewhat of the implications of leadership from a very young man named Chase McEachern. I know that Bruce Crozier, the member from Essex, wishes that he could be with us today. It was his work in bringing life and recognition to Chase's important impact on our society that really brought a much greater focus to the need to have associated with the greater deployment of defibrillators in environments the necessity of offering the appropriate legal structure that would make sure that any good Samaritan in any environment was not penalized. We want to welcome Chase's parents, John and Dorothy, his brother Cole and his grandmother Jean. We welcome them all to the Legislature today. We're so grateful for your being here.

We have Dan Andreae from the Ontario Association of Social Workers, who worked very closely on a key amendment.

Dr. Sheela Basrur, who is not able to be with us today, has been an enormous influence on the work that is here inasmuch as this piece of legislation really does continue apace with the substantial rebuilding of Ontario's public health capacity.

We want to thank as well, in that very same light, the late Justice Archie Campbell, for his imprint is decidedly here. We all owe him a very great debt of gratitude.

We've got representatives from Ornge. This is the Ontario medical transport capacity that will be dramatically enhanced as Bill 171 is considered and, if passed, will see the introduction of land-based critical care transfer capacity that has been long overdue in Ontario.

We want to acknowledge the many regulated health professions that have been involved in giving us advice around this. That includes the College of Physicians and Surgeons; the Ontario Association of Optometrists, and I believe Christine Parsons is representing it today; the College of Dental Hygienists, where Fran Richardson has provided so much leadership; the Ontario College of Pharmacists, Gerry Cook and Della Croteau. The four new regulated health professions have been crucial: kinesiology, psychotherapy and registered mental health therapists. We have representatives like Judith Ramirez, Annette Dekker and Naseema Siddiqui. From homeopathy, there are so many folks it's hard to mention all the names, and similarly with naturopathy. We've had really an extraordinary outpouring of interest from these very dedicated health care providers.



Bill 171 is about further transformation of the health care system. It has in various elements of it initiatives that will enhance accountability, dramatically expand protection for our patients, advance public health, and increase access to services for all Ontarians.

The bill promotes greater accountability. As an example, one of the rare moments of all-party support saw, a good time ago now, the restructuring of the system with respect to checking physicians' billings. We brought in a very fine gentleman, former Supreme Court Justice Cory, who gave us a good body of advice. This is an example of those initiatives which are contained in Bill 171.

At committee, through the good work of all committee members from all sides, we were able to enhance the protection for patients from the standpoint of the regulatory college complaints procedures by giving patients increased access to information and improved communication expectations from the college to the public. In a time when "transparency" is a word that we all use very much, this is a bill that goes very much further from the standpoint of the protection of patients and giving good-quality information to them about the circumstances related to regulated health care providers in the province of Ontario.

The bill—a very substantive bill indeed—also addresses substantively the promotion of public health. The government intends to establish, as is well known, the first-ever Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, a centre for public health excellence that will provide research, scientific and technical advice and support modelled after the Centers for Disease Control in the United States. This is one more of the elements that are brought to life as a result of the bill that is before us today.

We increased patient access to services by enhancing the services that some of our health care providers are able to provide. By expanding the scope of practice for our optometrists and dental hygienists, we create greater capacity for them to serve more patients and to serve those patients even better. At the same time, I'm very excited to be associated with the historic advancement on the number of regulated health professions that we have in the province of Ontario. Building on the support that the Legislature offered not so long ago for the introduction of traditional Chinese medicine as a regulated health profession, we're adding four new ones in this bill: naturopathy, homeopathy, kinesiology and psychotherapy. This is historic because, other than these five—the traditional Chinese medicine and the four that are contained in this bill—there had been no progress on this front indeed since 1991, so we're very proud of that.

We're very proud as well, as I spoke about a moment ago, of the capacity that this bill provides for the creation of a new land ambulance capacity for our medical transport system. Ontario enjoys one of the best medical air transport systems in the whole world, but that capacity sometimes creates a real challenge for municipally run land-based systems. When a very critical

patient needs to be transferred from an air service to a local hospital, we think it would be great to have the integrated capabilities of Ornge there. If this bill enjoys support from the Legislature, then our government will move forward with the introduction of 15 additional critical care land-based ambulances that will be an integrated element of the Ornge medical transport system. We think that will be good. It will provide faster transfers, but it really will enhance the consistency and the quality of care for our patients, and it has very meaningful assistance in the sense that because our sickest patients very often require a lot of personnel, sometimes drawn from the hospitals, we're going to take pressure off those hospitals and at the same time alleviate some of the most difficult transfers from those municipal land-based services.

I spoke a minute ago about the Chase McEachern Act and about the sheer common sense associated with the idea that defibrillators more broadly disseminated across our province into those environments where a lot of us are—that's for all of us. That a man, still a young boy, was able to bring influence to that, that his life has influenced this initiative which will invariably extend and add life for other Ontarians, is a remarkable tribute to a remarkable young man. Again, we thank the member from Essex, who brought this initiative to our attention.

I previously mentioned that Justice Campbell played an extraordinary role. SARS was a scorching incident. Human life was lost, including that of our health care providers, and, if we're honest about the circumstances that some of our health care providers faced during those days, we will know that some trust was broken. They depended upon Justice Campbell not just to be a good listener but to be a profoundly deep thinker in terms of the quality and quantity of the advice that he offered to us as a government following on the heels of SARS. We determined from the get-go that it was our obligation as the government in this jurisdiction, dealing with SARS in the aftermath or in the retrospective, to learn and apply those lessons well. It has been an extraordinary body of work, and appropriately so, because the events associated with SARS were so scorching.

In his final report on SARS, Justice Campbell concentrated on the safety of our front-line health care workers. He directed our attention to the need to protect our nurses and our doctors. The province, accordingly, is adopting the precautionary principle when dealing with infectious disease outbreaks, and that means safety first and foremost for our health care workers. I know, because they have told me in no uncertain terms, so many of them, that Justice Campbell is a very important source of justice for them.

Accordingly, we were all very sad when his recent and untimely death was announced. But we say to his family and to those like Doug Hunt, who worked alongside him on this work, that we are so incredibly grateful for his steadfast effort, even in the face of difficult circumstances on his own part. Ontario and the health and safety of Ontarians, and especially our health care workers, will



be another important part of the legacy of Justice Campbell—indeed a gentleman with a very profound impact in so many ways over time.

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We also have moved the amendment that where there is a risk of an infectious or communicable disease outbreak, our chief medical officer of health will need to consider the precautionary principle in issuing directives to health care facilities regarding personal protection equipment for our doctors, our nurses and other front-line health care workers. This is the first time ever in the history of our province, as best I know, where the precautionary principle has been included in a health statute—a part and parcel of the respect that we have for our front-line health care workers and for the legacy of advice and leadership that is associated with Justice Campbell. Our doctors, our nurses and other health care workers were the heroes of SARS. We owe it to them to never forget their sacrifice. Never again should they have to step into danger without the best protection we can muster. Indeed, that is embedded here in the bill.

Over the next number of months, of course, a bill of this magnitude asks much of those who work on it. There are many people in the ministry to whom I'm very grateful for the work they've done. They, alongside this impressive array of health care providers and associations that represent them, will have a tremendous amount of work to do on the details and implementation. Of course, legislation very often leads to substantial regulation, and accordingly there will be a lot of work for all of us to do as we move forward and implement this bill, not presuming but hopeful for support from this chamber.

The new Ontario public health agency, the one for health protection and promotion that I spoke of earlier, will be an important new part of the arsenal that helps us battle these public health threats, which I know are of great concern. We've had great advice in Ontario from the Walker report, the Naylor report, the Campbell report and the chief medical officer of health's first annual report. They all called for the creation of such an agency. This agency will be a crucial resource in supporting the important work that is done all the time by our chief medical officers of health.

I want in particular to take just a moment to acknowledge the contribution that the member for Nickel Belt has made to this particular schedule of the bill. We're glad to be able to accept some of her amendments to put worker safety on the agency's agenda. I would want to say that even before we had this nice thought embedded into my notes, given the historic news that the member from Nickel Belt made in the last week or so, she has from a very young age made an important contribution around here. As a minister, I've enjoyed the opportunity to work with her, sometimes to be speared and sometimes just to spar. But never was there any doubt about her values and the very clear intent that was always there from the standpoint of wanting the best for patients and indeed the best for health care workers. So as she has the opportunity to pursue just a little more

quality time with her family, we're at once both a little bit jealous but mostly just really happy for that circumstance. We wish you well. We know that your impact has been felt by many and that the appreciation for that rings in very many circles.

We established a tradition where pretty much every health bill, except the one I think that we agreed on in the Legislature with respect to the MRC process for physicians, has gone out to committee and has been enhanced by the committee process. I said before that I want to thank all of the members, but when I look at this bill, Bill 171, in terms of the areas where the bill was improved as a result of the work at committee, I think that we really have dramatically enhanced the transparency of information for patients.

I want to thank the colleges for their support for that, but I especially want to thank them in acknowledging that we have, in so doing, added some burden to their already challenging efforts. For the first time in Ontario, all findings of malpractice and professional negligence against regulated health professionals will be made available on the college websites. We're lighting up the path to disciplinary findings, and previously these have been shrouded in quite a bit of secrecy.

If passed, this bill would require regulated health colleges to post the following things on their websites: all matters referred to a discipline committee; every disciplinary proceeding; and every suspension or revocation of a member's certificate to practise. Where a health care professional has been found guilty of any criminal offence, that professional will be required to report this to their regulatory college. If the offence affects the health care professional's suitability to practise, the regulatory college would then make the offence public on its website. We would also require the posting of decision summaries on the college's website. Now the public will also have access to the content of a decision.

These are difficult things to balance out. We have tremendous respect—300,000 women and men, not all of them regulated health professionals, but a goodly number of them, suit up every single day in a lot of challenging environments, and they do their best for folks. But in human nature is the opportunity and the potential for human error. Accordingly, in a democratic environment, in a publicly funded health care environment, it's absolutely crucial that we maximize the transparency that is available to patients. This is the bottom-line expectation that is emerging in our society. That list of things that I spoke to would no longer be automatically removed after six years. It would remain as long as the decision is relevant to the health care professional's suitability to practise.

I'm also proud to say that any findings in a civil suit that related to a health professional's ability to practise will also have to be reported to the college and posted on the website.

We accepted a Progressive Conservative Party motion to further allow colleges to investigate a former member who lets his or her certificate of registration expire in



order to avoid being investigated—a further example, notwithstanding the way the Legislature sometimes is reflected, that the committee process really does provide a good opportunity for a variety of folks to work well together. These changes will create a new world of transparency for the regulated health colleges.

We're also pleased to welcome four more health professions, as I said before. When we came to office, one of the things that I was really actually a bit astonished by is that HPRAC, the body that I have depended upon in a very, very considerable way for advice with respect to the regulation of health bodies, was basically dead. I think the first thing we had to do was find a new chair and a board, and the first thing they had to do was bring HPRAC into compliance with the Legislature by filing two or perhaps three annual reports from my predecessor's time in office. Since that time, Barbara Sullivan and a really, really dedicated crew of folks have done just an extraordinary body of work. If we're frank about it, these are not easy-to-resolve issues, for on the other side of any scope-of-practice issue tends to be another college or association with a view which is not always aligned. And it is a body like HPRAC and the dedicated folks who serve there who really provide so much advice that we depend upon. It would be appropriate for me to go on longer in acknowledging the leadership of the former member of this Legislature from Halton, Barbara Sullivan, for the great leadership that she has provided.

This legislation solidifies our government's commitment to alternative health therapies following on the passage of the Traditional Chinese Medicine Act. At the heart of it, we have 13 million Ontarians, and they're not exactly all alike in their personal, ideological and philosophical determinations about the kind of health care advice that they want. We see increasingly a good number of people who are receiving health care advice on a complementary basis from a blend of traditions. Our regulatory health bodies were asked to try to keep up with that trend.

In closing, I want to focus on one particular amendment and I want to acknowledge—as I had a chance to say under, I believe, hard questioning from one of my critics of a good number of months back—that we could have done a little better in terms of getting this right proactively. I know that all members of the Legislature heard from social workers in their community offices. I don't want to talk about numbers for fear of giving them too much credit for what percentage of all the social workers that are out there let us know about their concerns, but it really is an example of a good-quality response from a well-organized association. It had always been our intention to exempt them from the controlled act so that they would continue to be able to provide care to their patients. We intended to do that through a regulation of another bill that exists. That might have made a lot of sense except that we weren't particularly transparent about our approach, and as a result we caused a lot of unsettling circumstances for too

many. I just want to say mea culpa; I'm sorry. We are just really grateful that folks worked so hard to make sure that we got that fixed up.

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I promised in a letter that in the legislation we would acknowledge their contribution to providing psychotherapy services, and our government moved an amendment that said that. We also accepted an amendment from the New Democratic Party to rename the college the College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists.

I have spoken longer than I intended. It was because I wanted to stop in a variety of places and say thank you. In the instance that I haven't done it well enough, I'm just going to take a few more seconds to say it one more time. Ontario is a big place, and the people who live in Ontario have a lot of different viewpoints and a lot of different interests. We do have rather a lot of different regulated health bodies and those folks who would seek to be regulated. Bill 171 is a powerful reflection on the complexity of the health care system in the province of Ontario. This is a bill that does many, many things, and it does those only because it has been informed by the fantastic leadership and efforts of many, many people. Recognizing that many of them are here and others might have the opportunity to hear wind of it, I want to thank them, not only for all they've done to date, but in recognition that as this bill is brought forward in the hopes that it passes, we will all be called upon to do much more work as we seek to further enhance the people's health care system.

It's a privilege to be able to bring my comments to third reading of this important bill. I close by saying that I will be supporting it and that I recommend it to all members of the Legislature.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** I'd like to thank the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and congratulate him for being the longest-serving Minister of Health and Long-Term Care since Medicare came into being.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Fonseca:** Congratulations. We know it's a daunting task to take on the Ministry of Health. It makes up almost half of our budget. It now has a budget of about \$39 billion and touches everybody in this large province of 13 million people. So once again, George, congratulations on that and for bringing forward this piece of legislation that will touch, I believe, everybody's life here in Ontario.

I'd also like to acknowledge the committee members, the stakeholders, the McEachern family, presenters and all the ministry staff who worked so hard, tirelessly, to help make the necessary positive changes to this legislation to improve our health care system. All the while, from the top at the minister's office straight through to all stakeholders and the many people who sent us e-mails and letters etc. about this piece of legislation, I know that



one thing we all continued to focus on was putting the patient always at the centre of this work.

Bill 171 has many components to it, as were established by Minister Smitherman. For this remaining time, I'm going to speak to the great progress that this committee has made in listening to and responding to the practitioners of non-medicinal therapy. I'll also speak briefly on the other components of the bill like public health agencies and the introduction of four new licence-granting colleges. These two different components are intended to keep Ontarians safe from any infectious disease and give people the knowledge that alternative medicine practices are licensed. This bill introduces the creation of the first ever arm's-length public health agency. This agency would operate in parallel to the Centers for Disease Control—the world-renowned Centers for Disease Control—in the United States of America. This centre, known as the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, would be a centre for specialized research and knowledge of public health, specializing in the areas of infectious disease, infection control and prevention.

This centre was called for in the Naylor and Campbell reports after both SARS and legionnaires' disease 2005 outbreaks. This new health agency would be accountable to both the people and the government by way of reporting directly to the minister and the board. It will have a public representative also on its board. Furthermore, it will be responsible for the constant public reporting via reports on the health of Ontario, public health performance and infection control, and other issues pertinent to public health, which is so important to the transparency and accountability of our health care system. An annual report will have an audited financial statement for tabling here in this Legislature. An annual business plan, which would include, amongst other things, a three-year rolling budget, will be presented to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Finally, this new agency would act in unison with a purpose of strengthening disease control and improving public health administration.

It's imperative to have this new agency in our province. It allows our province to continue to be a leader in medical research and innovation. It allows for the people to have this independent voice when it comes to responding to health pandemics such as Norwalk and SARS—not voices coming from different directions, but one voice.

A particular component of Bill 171 is the proposed creation of four new regulated health professions, which will make changes to the current Regulated Health Professions Act of 1991, as the minister said, which for too long sat dormant. These new colleges, as many of the members here know, will bring non-medicinal therapy, which has become a really popular choice with Ontarians, with the knowledge that it is the government's job and the job of all parties to ensure the well-being and safety of patients' usage of alternative therapy.

In addition, based on the advice provided by the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council, we suggested that there be a legislative change to include the regulating of four more professions. This is why our government moved to create new colleges for the following areas: naturopathy, homeopathy, kinesiology and psychotherapy. In addition to the creation of these new colleges, we also made some changes that would ensure a smooth transition from the current board of drugless practitioners to the new college.

For those who have not tried some of these practices, here is a quick overview. Naturopathy is a holistic approach to health care through the integrated use of therapies and substances that promote the individual's inherent self-healing process. Homeopathy practitioners believe that human beings naturally function in a state of harmony between mind, body and spirit. Kinesiology is the assessment of movement and function, and the rehabilitation and management of disorders to maintain and enhance movement in the areas of recreation, work and activities of daily living. Kinesiologists apply their skills for both preventive and rehabilitative processes. Psychotherapy is an alternative to psychiatry without the use of pharmaceuticals. Instead, it is an intense client-therapist relationship that examines deep emotional experiences, destructive behaviour and mental health issues.

During the committee meetings we had on this particular bill, chaired by the member from the riding of Prince Edward—Hastings, Ernie Parsons, we heard from many people who are part of the growing community of non-medicinal alternative therapy. Either as practitioners or administrative liaisons, we listened to their concerns regarding the issue of the regulation they would be placed under. Most of the four alternative practitioners didn't want to be lumped together with other practices. This committee, with all three parties, came together and answered those concerns which the homeopaths and naturopaths had. With all three parties working together at committee—and it was great to see—we came to an agreement to split the two colleges of homeopathy and naturopathy. This was something the homeopaths and naturopaths wanted, and our government listened. I must give credit to my fellow committee members Bill Mauro, the member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan; Elizabeth Witmer, former Minister of Health and the member for Kitchener—Waterloo; and Shelley Martel, the member for Nickel Belt. It was great to hear the minister speak of Ms. Martel's devotion to health care but also to her riding, and her commitment to the people of Ontario and to public service. It is always amazing to see someone like Ms. Martel, with her history and experience and the knowledge she has—knowledge through the many experiences she has had as an MPP and as a former minister and through her own life experiences that she brings forward in this Legislature. We all congratulate her for that. Also on the committee: Khalil Ramal, the member for London—Fanshawe, and John O'Toole, the member for Durham. I would like to thank them all for



working together. The member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale, Dr. Kuldip Kular, who is here with us today, was a particularly strong advocate for the splitting of the two colleges. I thank him for his dedication.

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However, there was great debate on a number of issues between the parties when it came to particular amendments, especially the amendment of the controlled act of communicating a diagnosis and the scope-of-practice statement. With respect to the new Naturopathy Act and the controlled act of communicating a diagnosis, the government's motion states that when communicating a diagnosis, it must be in the context of naturopathy. We see in the government motion that the use of the word "diagnosis" in conjunction with "naturopathic" will not limit naturopaths from making the kinds of diagnoses they currently do. This is consistent with what happened with the Traditional Chinese Medicine Act, where diagnosis is done in the context of traditional Chinese medicine because these modalities are separate and distinct from each other and western medical techniques. This is a significant amendment to Bill 171 because the communication of a diagnosis is very important on the road to recovery. By distinguishing these therapies from each other, the public will not be confused when they are given information on their condition and the proper treatment options. That is what this bill really comes down to: the public interest and public safety.

All parties at committee were trying to reach the same goal of two distinct colleges for naturopaths and homeopaths. There were some areas of disagreement on how to reach the objective, and the practice statement, or the mission statement, if you will, was an area where we disagreed. When reviewing the statement of practitioners of naturopathic medicine, we as the government wanted to make sure that the statement included the term which was consistent with the act itself. The same applies for the new Homeopathy Act.

One of our key concerns when drafting this legislation was to ensure that these health professions can continue to practise the same way they have for generations. We worked closely with the stakeholders to determine what kinds of treatments they are doing now and how that would fit into a new regulatory scheme. For example, the government amendment to create the new naturopathic college did not include the controlled act to prescribe. The simple reason for this was that by working closely with the Association of Naturopathic Doctors, we determined that the change was already made to the DPRA in the Traditional Chinese Medicine Act. Then, naturopaths will continue to be able to use the same natural health products with the products within the controlled act.

The creation of the colleges and the splitting of naturopaths and homeopaths from one another was a big task. We are making the transition from profession, from the Drugless Practitioners Act to the RHPA, as seamless as possible, so we have set forth a motion that will do the

following: The current regulator, the Board of Directors of Drugless Therapy, is included on the transitional council of the colleges. Complaints and discipline processes under way by the current regulator can transition to the new college when the new act is proclaimed. The registrants with the current regulator will automatically become members of the new college.

The transition amendment is key to a successful change. In respect to the issue of homeopathic care, the government motion did not include any controlled acts, while the NDP's response was that they wanted to give certain controlled acts to homeopathic practitioners who never had these measures in the first place. Homeopaths currently do not administer an injection or prescribed medicines, and HPRAC did not recommend any controlled acts for this profession. This proposed government motion will not impact homeopaths' current scope of practice or their ability to continue to provide the services that they currently provide to their patients. Should the changes happen at the federal level to limit any access to certain substances, then the province may make regulations under the RHPA or the Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act to enable homeopaths and naturopaths to continue access to those substances.

Once again, I want to thank all the members of the committee, I want to thank all of the stakeholders—all those who were involved in making this piece of legislation that much better. Now I'll hear from some of the other members.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I'm pleased to hear the speeches from the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and the member from Mississauga East on Bill 171. I would like to make clear that the PC Party supports this bill. We will very shortly, with the next speaker, hear from our health critic, who will go on at length about the bill.

I would just like, at this opportunity I have, to bring up a couple of health issues from the riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka. Today in petitions I did a petition to do with the doctor shortage, particularly in the south Muskoka area of my riding. That is an issue that's very important to the riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka. I know that the town of Gravenhurst, Mayor John Klinck, has been working actively trying to come up with a home for some family doctors and trying to entice family doctors to south Muskoka, and I've certainly heard from many constituents who are very concerned about attracting more doctors to south Muskoka. In fact, my mother lives in Gravenhurst over the wintertime, and this past year she was without a family doctor. There are many other people like her who don't have a family doctor in the south Muskoka area. It's a very important issue that needs to be addressed in south Muskoka.

The other health concern I have from the riding is a long-term-care concern, particularly in the Huntsville area, where we have a shortage of long-term-care home beds and we have gridlock in the emergency department because there are people occupying acute care beds who



would prefer to be in a long-term-care home, but we don't have enough beds around. As well, in the Huntsville area we have some older homes that are really in need of redevelopment, particularly Fairvern, that could do now with redevelopment. It's something that needs to be addressed.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** It's a pleasure for me to make some comments here. I'm going to keep them very general because I hope to have a chance to start my debate this afternoon. I guess that will remain to be seen—on how long the Conservatives go. In any event, I do have some concerns that I still want to raise with respect to some of the schedules, so I'll leave it for that time.

I want to thank all of those who came to the committee to make presentations in the two days that we held public hearings. The room was very hot, it was very crowded and it was not a lot of fun to do the work that had to be done. So I wanted to thank those people who persevered through the couple of hours that we were in committee on the two days of public hearings for having done that.

There were many people as well who sent in written submissions. I know my colleagues received those. People took a great deal of time to express either their support or their concerns, or to offer suggestions and to offer amendments to the committee. I appreciate that people did take the time to do that. They took the work very seriously.

Legislative counsel Ralph Armstrong went above and beyond the call of duty, as he did on Bill 140, for Ms. Witmer and I. I do want to say on the record that I appreciate the support that he provided for this bill, for Bill 140, for Bill 50 and for other bills in the past. He certainly did yeoman's service on this bill to get the amendments to all of us in time.

I want to thank as well the Hansard staff, the clerk and all of the staff who were involved in supporting the committee. I particularly want to thank the ministry because they were very good to work with in terms of suggested amendments. It was a process whereby there was not confrontation and people were in support, so there was some give and take with respect to amendments that were moved both by Ms. Witmer and myself that were accepted by the government. I appreciated that the government took the time to do that.

Finally, I want to thank both the Minister of Health and the member for Mississauga East for their very generous comments on the public record here today. I can tell you that the decision that I've made has not been an easy one. It will be difficult to be away from this place after 20 years, but I won't be going very far.

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**Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** I'm also very pleased to participate in this third reading of Bill 171. I want to thank the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I also want to congratulate him on being the longest-serving Minister of Health and Long-Term Care for our province.

As you know, I'm a family doctor turned politician. Bill 171, if passed, is going to help streamline and improve transparency in the complaints process that would apply to all health professional regulatory colleges, including the one of which I'm an active member at the present time, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.

I want to quote the Royal College of Dental Surgeons registrar: "This is a prime example of government taking appropriate steps to protect the public interest and improving on self-regulation. In doing so, it was consultative, collaborative, but never lost sight of its goals."

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** Something you can sink your teeth into.

**Mr. Kular:** That's right.

I fully support this bill and urge members on both sides of the House to support this bill so that it gets passed and will help the safety of the people of this province.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** As the member for Muskoka-Parry Sound has just indicated, we are going to be supporting this bill.

It was an interesting adventure. There were parts of the bill that we certainly had very strong support for. There were other parts that we felt the government had overlooked. Some of those corrections have now been made. And there were yet other parts where we had amendments and, regrettably, they were not accepted by the government.

But in many respects, I think we owe a great deal of gratitude to the people who work behind the scenes. I want to congratulate Barbara Sullivan. I think she's been an outstanding chair of HPRAC. She's done an excellent job in bringing forward recommendations. Some of her recommendations actually were not supported by this government, but many of them were.

I want to thank the staff at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Staff do really all of the work. Having been minister myself, they do most of the work on your behalf. They make all of the changes and listen very carefully to what the opposition does say, and I appreciate all of their hard work. Also the staff who worked with Shelley and I—Shelley has made reference to those individuals. Obviously we're not the ones who draft the amendments. They do a lot of work putting into amendment form the suggestions that we give them, which I certainly appreciate.

I think that most importantly on this bill we received a lot of communications from stakeholders. There were a lot of stakeholders who were impacted by this legislation, Bill 171. We heard from these people via fax, e-mail, phone, letters, stopping on the street—and congratulations to those people who participated.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Mississauga East has two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Fonseca:** I would like to thank the members for Parry Sound-Muskoka, Nickel Belt, Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale and Kitchener-Waterloo for their comments.



I know that all of us here in this House listened to many stakeholders, but the stakeholders that I and everybody here say are the most important are the people on the street, the people at the door. When we go to them, health care still continues to be the number one issue in my riding and, I know, in just about every riding in this province. What many of our stakeholders ask for is, they want transparency, they want accountability. They want to make sure that we have continuous improvement in our health care system. They want to make sure that we're not so closed-minded that we don't open up to other alternative medicines, and that we make sure that those alternative medicines are being brought forward to the public in a safe manner, where people can be assured of safety but also of efficacy. That's what Bill 171 does.

I have to agree with the members' statements when they say that we all worked very hard on this legislation with all the different stakeholders and people in the ministry. Only because of that can we all come here and feel very good about what we're doing and how we're moving forward with this bill.

There are many enhanced services. We now have enhanced services to professions like optometry, dental hygiene and pharmacy. These advanced services will only make our health care system that much better at the local level.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Witmer:** Today in some respects, as we debate Bill 171 in third reading, is a bit of an end of an era. I've had the opportunity now for almost four years to participate in health policy that's been brought forward, along with the minister, who was here earlier, and of course Ms. Martel, the member from Nickel Belt. I think at the end of the day, Shelley and I were able to hold the minister accountable and there were some changes that were made. We certainly appreciated the opportunity to work together. I in particular want to pay tribute to the member from Nickel Belt. I've had the opportunity of working with her now for some 17 years and I was personally very saddened to learn that she was going to be stepping down. But I think as a mother and as a wife, I can also understand it. I know that it was difficult for her and her family to come to this decision.

I would say she is a woman who I believe has had a tremendous impact on policy and legislation that has been passed in this House. She has been a fierce and tireless advocate for many people in Ontario. She has certainly been a very strong advocate for her own constituents in the Nickel Belt area. I know that in any opportunity I've had to interact with her, she has always conducted herself in a very professional manner, and she's going to be a big loss to this House. I feel I'm not just losing a colleague; I feel I'm losing a friend. I've enjoyed the opportunity to be the critic with her, as we've had some fun with the Minister of Health on occasion.

Having said that, we have Bill 171. I did indicate, I think, that people have all played a very significant role. Certainly I thought the committee went quite well once we heard from the stakeholders. Regrettably, not all of

the stakeholders were able to make a verbal presentation. I think that's one of the things you have when you have a huge bill. This was an omnibus bill. It dealt with a lot of different components. I think many of the stakeholders actually didn't even realize until almost when we got to committee that indeed there was a bill out there that had some application to them; or came to the realization that maybe if they did want some changes made, now was the time for the changes be made. Anyway, it was a good process, and many of the initiatives in the bill were long overdue. For others, it's unfortunate that they didn't make it into the bill, because the act hadn't been opened for many years. So I want to talk a little bit today about some of what I think went well and some of what I believe could have gone better.

**1650**

We know that there were over 100 requests from the public to make oral submissions, and we certainly received written submissions from hundreds of other people who simply could not be accommodated, so in many respects this bill didn't have the opportunity to be given as thorough a hearing as the Traditional Chinese Medicine Act had when we created only one college.

As I said before, I was surprised that some of the recommendations deviated from the recommendations of the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council, but some of them were subsequently changed.

The first schedule, of course, is schedule A, the Ambulance Act. It's going to facilitate the implementation of a new integrated air and land ambulance system to manage transfers of patients between health care facilities. Obviously, we hope that this newly rebranded ambulance service will continue to deliver the high calibre of care to many of our sickest patients in the province, and we certainly do support that change.

Schedule B involves some amendments concerning health professionals. It will enhance the services that optometrists, dental hygienists, pharmacy technicians and interns provide. This schedule actually does flow from recommendations that have been made and published by HPRAC over the years, and again, I think it will help put the interests of Ontarians first by allowing the public to have more choice and enhancement of health services. In some ways, obviously, it can relieve some of the pressure on the health system as people look for other ways to access health services.

Schedule D: This is the Health Protection and Promotion Act, the Ontario Water Resources Act, and the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002. Schedule D proposes the transfer of legislative responsibility of five categories of nonresidential and seasonal residential drinking water systems from the Ministry of the Environment to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. On March 26, I indicated that schedule D didn't seem to have much in the way of substance. In addition to this, I said that without further clarification regarding the costs associated with the testing of water, it would be difficult to support this initiative without receiving some confirmation from the Minister of Health that the costs of testing



water would be borne by the province and not Ontario's overburdened boards of health or municipalities. I'm very pleased to report that during the first day of clause-by-clause proceedings, the member from Mississauga East did assure me that the Minister of Health had indicated in a letter to all public health units dated April 3 of this year that if this legislation is passed, "provincial support would be provided on a 100% basis for start-up costs, including an initial planning period, followed by a two-year period of conducting the initial site-specific risk assessments." So it appears that at least in the short term, in the near term, there will be provincial support, and obviously, then, we'll need to continue to monitor that. I appreciated Mr. Fonseca's bringing that information forward.

We know that safe drinking water continues to be a very serious issue; Walkerton reminds us of that. We now have become aware of the presence of lead in some of the municipal systems. This issue regarding water safety is one that we need to continue to take very seriously and that we need to continue to address. I am concerned now about the issue related to lead and what appears to be a lack of action on the part of the government.

Schedule F: This is the Health Protection and Promotion Act. I did put forward an amendment that would have made some changes. Obviously, there is some regret that our amendment, which was put forward at the request of the Ontario Medical Association, was not accepted.

We are very concerned about the fact that we don't have enough medical officers of health in Ontario. The OMA has indicated they are concerned as well with the fact that these MOH vacancies are not being filled. Certainly, we need to do a much better job. In fact, the Ontario Medical Association indicated in their written submission to the standing committee on social policy, "It has become evident that section 62(2) of the Health Protection and Promotion Act is not sufficient to cause MOH vacancies to be expeditiously filled."

I'm concerned by what was omitted by the government's amendment to our amendment. We currently, today, have one third—12 of the 36—of the MOH positions not filled. Our amendment was not accepted. All we got was a government amendment speaking to the fact that there should be an annual report indicating the number of vacancies. I think we need to identify the vacancies, but we also need to identify the activities that are going to be undertaken to fill those vacancies. Our amendment to do so was not accepted, and my colleague from Nickel Belt had a similar amendment. We talk about SARS; we talk about Walkerton. I think if we genuinely are concerned about the protection of the public, public safety, it is important that all 36 of those positions be filled. I think it's important that we currently have at least 12 of them that are not filled, because it does have an impact. So we need to address this. This issue of the fact that one third of the medical officers of health positions are not filled is, I think, really a grave

concern, and certainly it leaves us somewhat vulnerable, when we have a local outbreak of infection, as to how we're best going to manage that. So I think there was a lost opportunity on the part of the province and the ministry in not adopting our amendment to ensure that not only would we identify the number of vacancies, but we could also identify ways in which these vacancies could be filled.

The OMA has indicated for a long time now that they are concerned about the capacity of our public health system, and that's why they provided some of these recommendations. In fact, let me read from their November 2005 policy report, where they say, "Public health, like many other health care specialties, must be ready to go 'from 0 to 60' at any given time—and that time is unpredictable. Similar to an emergency department or an intensive care unit, volumes and the nature of cases can be trended over a period of time, using historical data, current trends and an understanding of the environment. However, activity levels can change quickly and the system must be properly resourced with skilled professionals for the unexpected at any and all times."

I go on to quote from them: "We have learned many lessons from SARS, but one of the most profound was the corroboration of what we already knew—SARS was only an example of an outbreak of disease—it was destined to happen, and it is destined to happen again. For those health care professionals who worked in the greater Toronto area, this knowledge has been transferred from an intellectual understanding to a chilling reality at a visceral level. We have not increased our medical officer of health capacity since the SARS outbreak and do not currently have an adequate number of public health experts to respond effectively to another outbreak...."

"The Walkerton experience provides an opportunity to examine and learn important lessons relating to accountabilities within the public health system. The incident draws our attention to the need for sound governance, properly credentialed full-time medical officers of health, strong, independent leaders with executive authority, and a system that empowers the medical officer of health to perform his or her fiduciary role without constraint or influence from the political arena."

1700

That's taken from the Ontario Medical Association health policy report of November 2005 entitled *Guarding the Health of Citizens: The Crucial Role of the Medical Officer of Health*.

I just want to stress how regrettable it is that we currently, today, still have vacant almost one third of the medical-officer-of-health positions. This does not seem to have been a priority for the government. They didn't accept our amendment that would have looked at ways to ensure that those vacancies were filled.

I think there are other areas here. We had other motions that looked at protecting the public. If you take a look at schedule F, it makes numerous amendments to the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Among them,



the act is amended to allow reporting by medical officers of health to health facilities in regard to communicable diseases acquired at facilities and to allow for the issuances of orders against institutions or public hospitals for the purpose of dealing with communicable disease outbreaks. SARS showed us that there is no easy way to deal with new infectious diseases, and obviously there was a need for strong leadership.

The Ontario Hospital Association had a submission regarding an appeal and review process. Again, they wanted the medical officer of health to be able to take "definite and immediate action in emergency situations." They recommended that "an appeal mechanism be built into the legislation that would provide appropriate due process in instances where a public hospital or other institution has concerns regarding an order that impacts its ability to deliver care." They were concerned that "the order may request resources deemed critical by the planners of another facility and while solving the problem in one facility" might cause "the same or a similar problem in another."

They said, "There needs to be a process by which additional clarification as to the rationale for the issuance of the order or appealing an order can be made, since public hospitals are accountable to meeting the needs of their communities and ensuring the safety of their staff. In addition, clear time limits on an order would effectively trigger a review of the necessity to continue with an order beyond its expiry date." That was from the Ontario Hospital Association submission.

We've talked about Justice Cory. I think Justice Cory's recommendations for the most part have now been adopted. Regrettably, they were much slower to be adopted than had been originally anticipated. It was actually 22 months later, after his report was introduced. So again, I think that's noteworthy.

We've got the creation of this new agency in schedule K, the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion. There is a need for this agency, we would agree. However, I would also indicate that the government has taken a different approach than was recommended by Supreme Court Justice Archie Campbell, who said that an arm's-length agency fails to take into account the major SARS problem of divided authority and accountability. He said in his report, *Spring of Fear*, "An important lesson from SARS is that the last thing Ontario needs, in planning for the next outbreak and to deal with it when it happens, is another major independent player on the block...."

"The commission in fact recommended a much different arrangement in its first interim report, and warned against creating ... another autonomous body, when SARS demonstrated the dangers of such uncoordinated entities...."

We have schedule L, the Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act, here. We have a letter here regarding schedule L that was sent to my office regarding that change: "The OCP very much supports Bill 171 and considers that passage of this bill will provide regulatory

health colleges with the ability to more effectively and efficiently regulate our professions in the public interest."

I think some of the changes are seen as good news for people in the province. It will permit pharmacists in Ontario to fill prescriptions authorized by prescribers licensed in other Canadian jurisdictions. This is good news for patients in the north and the east who obtain their medical services and prescriptions from physicians in Manitoba and Quebec. Currently, they can't have them filled in Ontario. It will bring Ontario into line with the practice that is already in place elsewhere.

Certainly the college indicated they were also supportive of amendments that would permit the college to take quick action to close down a pharmacy where there is compelling evidence that continued operation of that pharmacy could put the public at risk. We had an example in Hamilton in 2005 when a counterfeit product was being dispensed from a pharmacy. The college was able to close the pharmacy, but it took five business days and it had to go to the provincial courts to obtain the right to do so under the current legislation. Again, there's support for that.

We introduced a motion—it was our motion 65—concerning schedule M, the Regulated Health Professions Act. There were some motions we introduced here that I was disappointed were not adopted by the government, because it's been 15 years since the bill was opened. There was an opportunity to make some changes that were actually supported by the college, recommended by the colleges. In fact, any amendments that we brought forward were not our own. Obviously, they're always as a result of stakeholders.

One of the recommendations was a proposal that was brought forward by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario to appoint a legal chair to chair their discipline panels. For the benefit of the people watching, I just want to read a portion of the college's written submission as to why they wanted a legal chair to be able to head up the discipline panels:

"The college's current discipline process has become increasingly litigious and procedurally demanding, as it faces growing pressure from defence lawyers and the courts. Contested hearings are prolonged as discipline panels confront issues and arguments that are progressively complex and strongly challenged.

"Independent legal advice as currently structured is not designed to direct the panel, such that the panel is left to make procedural technical decisions without the requisite expertise. For example, when objections occur during the course of a case, the panel must receive advice from ILC, followed by submissions of counsel for both parties on the advice of ILC, and then make a decision in an area of expertise outside their own. Each ILC has a different approach to how directive they will be, with the result that there can be inconsistencies, thereby causing further confusion for the panel members. The panel then must be able to be write written reasons that will withstand judicial scrutiny." This despite the fact that these people are not lawyers.



"As a result"—and this is why the college was making the recommendation—"the college recommends that a small pool of three or four retired judges and/or experienced litigators be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to the colleges' discipline committee. When appointed by the discipline committee to chair specific panels, the jurist would add value by making procedural decisions in consultation with the panel and by assisting with writing decisions. These individuals would be public non-council appointments, ensuring that the existing ratio of professional/public members on college discipline panels is maintained."

1710

They go on to say: "A legal chair would bring additional expertise to the discipline panel that would (1) enhance collaborative decision-making and build greater capacity within a panel; (2) allow the medical panel members, at the same time, to focus on the medical care and professional conduct issues; and (3) enable the panel to be more proficient at deciding procedural issues and arguments during hearings, and at preparing its reasons."

"This approach has successfully been in place in other jurisdictions, including Nova Scotia, Quebec and Saskatchewan."

That recommendation was respectfully submitted by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. I think it is very regrettable that the government did not accept the recommendation that we have a legal chair for discipline panels. If you listen to either the professionals or if you look at the public members, they simply don't have the expertise, and of course people on the other side are bringing in their lawyers. So I think this is certainly something that could have and should have been adopted but was not.

We also brought in other amendments as well. There was a motion 51 concerning providing notice to a member who is subject to a complaint. We put that motion forward on the recommendation of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario: "The college believes that the RHPA currently does not specify a set time period for the provision of notice to a member who is subject to a complaint. While the college is supportive of a general provision imposing a time limit, it stresses the importance of allowing for exceptions in certain cases where at least some investigation needs to be done prior to notifying the subject member."

They pointed out that, for example, "A sexual abuse, fraud or serious prescribing complaint may require the college to obtain an appointment of investigators by the ICR committee, and in some cases perhaps even a search warrant, to obtain original medical records prior to notifying the member of the complaint out of concern for the preservation of the integrity of evidence. That is why in these types of cases, if the member under investigation is aware that a complaint against him/her has been submitted to the college before the investigation commences, the integrity of evidence may be jeopardized.

"The appointment of investigators and the obtaining and execution of a search warrant will generally take more than 14 days and therefore there needs to be a mechanism to allow for an exception to the 14-day general notice provision for these types of cases." Again, a recommendation made by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.

Obviously we're thrilled that schedule N, the Chase McEachern Act, which promotes the use of automated external defibrillators, is moving forward. I know my colleague from Simcoe, Mr. Tascona, was strongly supportive of this initiative. We're really pleased that it's going to make it much easier for the use of AEDs in public.

Our party has always supported this type of initiative. In fact, we spent around \$9 million on the heart defibrillator initiative that equipped and trained 4,500 paramedics in Ontario with such devices. We had the chance to hear from Chase's father, John, during the public hearings. He certainly made some very moving remarks. I think we all applaud him for having the courage to come forward to speak to the committee. Statistics show that every minute someone goes into cardiac arrest, their chances of survival without treatment decrease by 7%, so we strongly support that initiative.

We supported schedule O, the new college for kinesiologists. It provides a level of care that people in this province expect. All three parties agreed to schedule P, taking a look at the Naturopathy and Homeopathy Act. There was concern about a joint college. We received a lot of letters from people on that particular issue. They were looking for separate colleges. They both believed that their distinct and unique system of medicine deserved protection under a separate college. These groups also proposed that their professions boast sufficient numbers to warrant separate colleges. I'm very pleased that we all agreed that there should be two colleges instead of one so they can preserve and maintain the distinct tenets of naturopathy and homeopathy. We certainly received a lot of communication from people in those two fields. I think this was a case where pressure paid off.

Schedule Q, the Psychotherapy Act: I think we were all surprised that the government initially excluded social workers from the regulation of psychotherapy. Everybody in this province knows that social workers do a tremendous job in delivering a wide array of programs and services to literally thousands of Ontarians. They have a significant impact on the lives of many individuals and many families. I think of the folks at home who work for different agencies and service deliverers; they do just a tremendous job. We were pleased that we were able to give them recognition in 1998, when we introduced the Social Work and Social Service Work Act, because until that time, Ontario had been the only province that didn't regulate social work. Since that time, they've continued, as I say, to be outstanding health professionals. We did include a substantive amendment to Bill 171 to include Ontario social workers under the proposed regulation of



psychotherapy; the other parties did as well. I'm really pleased that this amendment has been accepted and that we're going to continue to see social workers being able to deliver key services in so many different areas—probation, mental health, services for people with developmental handicaps and children's aid societies.

**Mr. Patten:** Counselling.

**Mrs. Witmer:** Counselling; they do a tremendous job in counselling. I think of the services at home—

*Interjection.*

**Mrs. Witmer:** Pardon?

**Mr. Patten:** We need some counselling; politicians need some counselling.

1720

**Mrs. Witmer:** Oh. Richard says that when he retires he's going to need some counselling.

They truthfully do. I would say the group that probably lobbied hardest, longest and loudest for changes to Bill 171 was the social workers. They were the first ones out of the gate. As I say, it took some of the health professionals a long time to even become aware of the fact that changes were being made and that they might have an opportunity to impact some of the changes. But I will tell you, social workers were certainly the first ones to send lots of communications to my office and to come and see me. I had people here in the Toronto office, I had people in the Waterloo office. We've got some great social work students and professors in my own community, we've got great programs in schools, and I have to commend them for the leadership that they provided, because I certainly think it was thanks to them that all three parties agreed that a very, very substantive amendment needed to be made to include social workers under the proposed regulation of psychotherapy.

However, having said that, although the government was responsive in this respect, they did not move forward with the other concern that some of the social workers had regarding the use of the title "doctor" in the province of Ontario. Regretfully, Ontario is going to remain the only jurisdiction in Canada—that's pretty significant—that confines the use of the title "doctor" under the Regulated Health Professions Act. Unfortunately, the government did not agree to a motion that we put forward to address the restriction on the use of the title "doctor" by Ontario's social workers.

I just want to read a memo that I received from Nancy Riedel Bowers, MSW, RSW, PhD, dated May 27: "Re Hansard response to the Bill 171 amendment put forward by E. Witmer and S. Martel, May 14, 2007, in the social policy committee." I'm going to quote directly from her letter. This is what she writes:

"Having attended and presented with two colleagues of the doctor of social work task force at the social policy committee hearings for Bill 171 on May 7, I have now read the decision as to whether to allow our request for section 33 of the Regulated Health Professions Act to be amended to include social workers with doctoral degrees. The Hansard clearly identifies that the committee will give the matter consideration but with absolutely no

clarity as to why the matter is not going forward at this time."

That's what's key, and this is what she underlines: "absolutely no clarity as to why the matter is not going forward at this time."

She goes on to say:

"I, along with other senior colleagues with doctoral degrees in social work, have been waiting for a review of this act. We have been part of meetings for four years to prepare for this review and we have been part of much consultation with the Ontario association of social work and social service workers, the Ontario College of Social Workers, and with lawyers.

"I was hired by our committee to conduct international research on the matter and found, as you are well aware, that we are the only location in the entire world, including all the provinces, the United States, Britain, Australia, China and many other countries, where we are not able to use our deserved, earned degree in a health-mental health capacity.

"Quebec has the only model of inclusion that could work swiftly to amend the Ontario RHPA; that is, to allow for the use of title 'doctor,' with professions denoted after the name, along with academic degrees.

"My colleagues in the United States who conduct child and play therapy to situations of trauma and very serious issues are aware of this intended blocking of the social work profession in Ontario from using their well-earned titles.

"In the United States, social workers, along with psychologists and medical doctors, amongst others with senior degrees, are all permitted to use their titles. Some of these colleagues were called upon to intervene with the children who were in schools in and around Ground Zero the day that the twin towers were hit. Their expertise was valued in that crisis situation and some have indicated that with the restriction on the use of title 'doctor' in Ontario, they would not relocate to this province."

Listen to this: They're not going to relocate to this province if we're going to put a restriction on the use of the title "doctor." Ironically, Ontario has the largest number of doctoral programs in social work, hires the largest number of mental health professionals and publishes the largest amount of academic work in children's and adult mental health. Despite all this, the largest number of doctoral programs in social work, the hiring of the largest number of mental health professionals, the publication of the largest amount of academic work in children's and adult mental health, we are still restricting the use of the title "doctor" in Ontario, unlike the rest of the world that has moved forward and where they are entitled to use their deserved, earned degree in a mental health capacity.

She goes on to say—and this is in bold letters. She's speaking to all of us in this House. She's speaking to the Minister of Health, she's speaking to Premier McGuinty, she's speaking to the government, who has the majority, who has the power, and she says:



"I beg of you at this time, recognizing that decisions are being made imminently, to reconsider the decision of the social policy committee of last week. The implications for the profession of social work, as well as the expertise for the treatment and therapy of children and adults, is greatly affected by this wish to hesitate when no good reason has been given to do so.

"The HPRAC review has recommended, by implication, the inclusion of social workers with doctorates along with the listed five professions of section 33. Their research, along with mine, the opinion of lawyers and the research completed by the government should be sufficient at this time for inclusion of the amendment by Mrs. Witmer and Ms. Martel."

She goes on to say, "Thank you for your reconsideration of this very important matter."

I urge the government to reconsider the decision that was made at committee. I urge you to make changes in order that we can move forward and include social workers and allow them, as they have asked, to basically be recognized as they are in other countries. She suggested that Quebec has a model of inclusion that could work swiftly to amend the Ontario RHPA, and that would be to allow for use of title "doctor" with professions denoted after the name along with the academic degrees.

I urge the government—this is the one amendment that there has been absolutely no reason, no clarity provided as to why the issue is not moving forward at this time. Both Ms. Martel and I did make amendments, and I would just urge the government to ensure that they will address this issue. I don't know why they're blocking the social work profession from using their well-earned titles. That, to me, is one of the biggest issues that has not been resolved, when you consider the expertise we have in this province and the need for these individuals to meet the needs of children and families in our community. I hope that the government, within the time that remains, gives this very serious consideration. I know that they would receive unanimous support to introduce that amendment from all parties in this House. Surely, there has to be a way at this point in time that we can consider an avenue to address that issue and make the appropriate amendment.

1730

I just want to also indicate that at the end of the day the Ontario Association of Hypnotherapists had some concerns as well that they feel have not been addressed and that they feel could have an impact on mental health services in the province of Ontario. They wanted hypnosis to be specifically excluded from the Psychotherapy Act, and they were looking for support in creating a framework for voluntary self-regulation for hypnotherapists in Ontario.

That concludes my remarks. As I say, it's a huge bill; it's an omnibus bill. The government certainly got some parts right; after public hearings, we have more parts that are right. There are still a few outstanding concerns, particularly the one regarding the "doctor" title for social

workers. That's the issue that I have continued to receive correspondence on, and I think there is extreme disappointment that the issue wasn't addressed. The government didn't give any reason as to why they weren't going to address it at this time. As I say, the act hadn't been opened for 15 years, and this was the opportunity to get it done. I really want to conclude by beseeching all members of this House to do what they can to encourage the minister and the government to move an amendment that would provide the "doctor" title to those social workers in our province who certainly deserve it.

Anyway, it has been a great opportunity to work with all of my colleagues in the House. We are nearing the end of our four-year term, and I guess this is going to be the last health bill that we all have a chance to debate—in a few weeks, I guess we'll all be leaving here—but there are certainly many provisions within this bill that are long awaited. I'm pleased at the end of the day that, working co-operatively, we were able to make a lot of amendments that are going to benefit the health professionals and make other changes but that, most importantly are going to respond to the needs of people, in the province of Ontario and provide more accessibility to health care providers. There are initiatives here that are going to increase people's chances of living a healthier and longer life as well. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Martel:** I wanted to follow up from where the member from Kitchener-Waterloo left off, which is around the issue of the "doctor" title, because she is correct. Both she and I moved an amendment that essentially went back to an HPRAC recommendation. The amendment that was moved is essentially the language that was provided by HPRAC around this issue in its document called New Directions. HPRAC made a very significant recommendation regarding the "doctor" title, which sections of the RHPA should be repealed and what should be substituted. When I have a chance, I will be reading more into the record in terms of what they had to say around this issue.

But, really, I didn't understand the government's rationale for not moving on this matter at this time. It is highly unlikely that we're going to get another opportunity in the very near future to open up these acts and make necessary changes. I think that Barbara Sullivan has done a wonderful job at HPRAC, and I regretted very much that, with respect to this particular issue, the government was not compelled to move on it. I think that we have an opportunity now, and by not doing so it will be a long, long time before the situation ever gets rectified in the way that it should, which is to allow others who have equivalent educational credentials to also use a doctor title. So I regret that that didn't happen during the course of these public hearings.

I do want to say as well that there were a number of amendments that were moved by both Mrs. Witmer and myself with respect to CPSO. The government accepted some of them, and others around hearings and the formation of tribunals—I guess that's one of the words



you could use—were not accepted. That was not an uncommon problem. We also had this raised with us by the royal college, who expressed their concerns about their ability to find panel members if you had different panels that were sitting at the same time, and that was going to cause them some serious difficulties. I think those could have been resolved in the manner that had been put forward by CPSO or in the manner that had been put forward by the royal college, and I regret that the government didn't do that.

I think we're going to have ongoing problems not just at those two colleges but at a number of others as a result of our inability to agree on how to fix problems that were identified by colleges that have been in place for some long time now and have a clear understanding of some of the pitfalls of the current legislation and what needs to be done to rectify these matters.

Finally, if I might, I want to thank the member from Kitchener–Waterloo for her very, very generous comments with respect to our being here together for a very long time now. Some days, it seems longer than others. She has been here for 17 years, and my 20th anniversary will be on September 10. I certainly appreciated working with her in the last couple of years as health critic for her party, and I've been health critic for mine. I just want to wish her well in the next election. I don't have to run again; she does. I hope she does all right.

**Mr. Patten:** I'm pleased to react to the member from Kitchener–Waterloo and her comments. As usual, I think she has done a thorough job of analyzing the scope of this omnibus bill and the range of significances that are here as well. Because I only have about a minute and a half, I'd like to respond to a couple of areas. Certainly, we received a great deal of response from putting together, in the initial drafting, the naturopathic and homeopathic schools. That is now separated out, and I hope that everybody is happy—certainly, with the social workers, as was pointed out as well.

There's great resistance in the existing medical field. Let's face it: That's where the pressure comes from. Other than the medical doctors, they don't want anyone else to use the title, by and large. My reaction is, "Get over it." There's a new day of new understandings, of new therapies that have a rich and extremely important role to play in the healing process. It's not all based on western medicine—that model and the arrogance that is very often there—which is a good model, but it's not the answer to everything.

I'll tell you that when I had cancer seven years ago, the therapy that was the most helpful to me was that of the naturopaths, who helped me to look at healing as part of my own responsibility and all the things that one can do in terms of diet, in terms of your spirit, in terms of your mental attitude, in terms of some special supports with minerals and vitamins and omega oils and things of that nature, which are very helpful to get your immune system up. The regular medical model didn't even look at that. Anyway, I'll leave that as it is.

I would like to congratulate my friend—I hope we'll have another opportunity—from Nickel Belt, who recently announced that she was not going to be running again. I have great respect for her. She's a very diligent member and will be missed by this House. I'm sure that the member from Kitchener–Waterloo will be running again and be back again. I want to wish you all the very best too.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby–Ajax):** I appreciate the opportunity to add just a few comments with respect to Bill 171. I would like to start by commending my colleague the member for Kitchener–Waterloo for her dedicated and meticulous work on this bill, with the result that the amendments that she has brought forward, along with the considerable work that the member from Nickel Belt has done on this bill, have led to some significant changes and amendments to this bill that will make it even stronger. I think they should be commended for their excellent work on this.

1740

This is a massive bill, as everyone has commented. It is a huge omnibus bill that deals with improving health systems in Ontario. There are some 18 schedules to it dealing with a large and very diverse group of issues. I would like to just comment on two of the particular schedules that are contained in this bill, because they are issues that I have heard directly from some of my constituents who have met with me in my community office to make their representations known with respect to this bill, which I have passed along to my colleague.

One is schedule P, the one that deals with naturopathy and homeopathy. I understand that in the course of the hearings on this bill they were separated out into two separate colleges, which I think is going to serve the professions well as we move forward because they are two very different types of health professions. I think we should commend the government for making those changes. I did hear a lot from constituents about that.

Secondly, with respect to schedule Q, dealing with the psychotherapy aspect, I did have a number of social workers who came to meet with me who spoke about the need to engage in psychotherapy, that being one of the essential tenets of their profession. Again, I commend the government for accepting that and for making those amendments.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** Just before I get into the comments of the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, I just want to add my own personal thanks to the member from Nickel Belt. I personally have spoken to her. I'll do that at another place and another time, but I want to echo the joy that I've had in getting to know her and watching her do her work in this place. More importantly, she made the decision, and I know, because she told me, that it was a very difficult decision, because you are engaged in this province, you are engaged in your riding, and you have a family. I know there are priorities in life, and you've chosen that one. I congratulate you and I thank you for that decision. I preach a lot about that in this place in terms of family first, the individual, the human



first, so I appreciate that decision and how difficult it was.

The other is the Chase McEachern situation. The McEachern family came to Brantford before we even discussed this bill, and with the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Walter Gretzky and the city, we started doing the defibrillator. I got to meet the family and I can tell you that I am so impressed with their passion. That this family wanted to turn the crisis and the disaster into a positive thing tells us again, one more time, how important our families and people are and the impact they can have in the province. So I want to thank them.

I also want to say thank you to the teaching profession, because they were the first ones who came through with the blue pages that said all of the things they had to do—the discipline—and they didn't make it a secret. I have to tell you, at first it was a novelty to look through the pages to see who got disciplined. But now it has turned into an actual format in which the public gets to see exactly what is going on in the profession. I would say that the secrecy of health is now hopefully going to be ripped open, because there are some cultures in there that everything must be kept secret from the people that it's all about. So I'm proud about that moment.

Also, the fight that has gone on before in the long term between the MRC—that took a long time for us to change.

Now I come back quickly to the member from Kitchener–Waterloo. Fifteen years in the making—a lot of governments have gone and come, so there could have been some more work done by each one of the governments that led to this point. So I'm glad we're all on the same page and I thank you very much for those comments.

I look forward to the member from Nickel Belt giving us the final hurrah, at least on this topic and this bill. I think you're going to get some time.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Kitchener–Waterloo has two minutes in which to respond.

**Mrs. Witmer:** For people who are watching, I think they've just heard four people speak who do an outstanding job in this House. I think you can see, based on the remarks that have been made, the ability of people in this House to come together, to reach agreement, to reach consensus, to appreciate the work of others.

I want to thank the member for Nickel Belt. We've heard how she will be departing.

I want to thank the member for Ottawa Centre. We're going to miss you, Richard. It's not going to be the same without you here. You've always been a hard worker.

We've heard from my colleague in Whitby–Ajax. She's probably the newest member of our team. When you hear her speak, you know that she's going to be an outstanding individual and make a wonderful MPP, really here for the right reasons: to advocate on behalf of the people. And of course my good friend the member from Brant is always positive, always wanting to work in co-operation with other people.

For people watching, this House has the opportunity to work very well if we always continue to put at the top of

our minds the people who are going to be impacted by the legislation, a desire to work in co-operation to try to reach consensus and put aside some of the other things that sometimes happen in here.

We have Bill 171. It is moving forward. It will be the last health bill this government introduces during this term. I'm just glad I had the opportunity to be a part of it. I want to thank the stakeholders, because without their input and their strong advocacy, we wouldn't have seen the bill we've ended up with. It's a good, strong bill.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate.

**Ms. Martel:** It's going to be hard to get gunned up for 10 minutes, and then have to shut it down and come back another day, but let me say that I am pleased to participate in the debate and I do intend to go for an hour. I'm not sure how that will be divided up and when I'll get to do the rest of it, but I am doing the lead-off for the NDP and there are some things I want to say with respect to the bill.

Before I get there, though, I should say something to Mr. Patten, because of course it's been public for some time that he's leaving. He, Mrs. Witmer and I have been sitting on a committee together to select the new chief medical officer of health and assistant deputy Minister of Health to replace Dr. Sheela Basrur, and it's going to be a very difficult task indeed to find anyone to replace Dr. Basrur.

During the course of those meetings I've been talking to Richard about what he plans to do next, and there's been some discussion, all the while knowing that he wasn't the only one going, but the time and place for me to announce hadn't come yet. I really wish you well. It's been a pleasure to serve with you over many years in this House. I don't know what you'll end up doing next; I know you've got some possibilities. I'm not looking, so I'm not even there yet, but I really wish you well in whatever you do next, Richard.

I want to thank all those folks who made presentations and who provided written submissions. People did take this work seriously. There were so many different views with respect to some of the schedules, how they should be dealt with and how people's concerns should be responded to. The process in terms of going through many different schedules that had many different aspects of health and trying to find some common ground wasn't easy all of the time, but people worked together to do that, recognizing that these are issues we need to move forward on. We wanted to come out of it with a better bill, and I think we have.

I want to thank legal counsel Ralph Armstrong again for all the work he did in trying to make the time set out for amendments to be placed—he worked very hard to do that—and the other staff: the committee clerk, Trevor Day; the research staff; the Hansard staff—all of the people who worked in two days of public hearings in a committee room that was very hot, very stuffy and very full of people—in fact, there were people in an overflow room for both of those days—who then came back to do clause-by-clause for a number of hours to wrap it all up. I



appreciated all that work and all of their efforts. Finally, thank you to the ministry staff and my colleagues in the other parties. I think the work moved along very well. There was a good spirit of co-operation; there was acceptance of both NDP and Conservative amendments during the process. I appreciated that the government, because in many cases we were all thinking the same thing, was prepared to make some small changes to allow some of those opposition amendments to be adopted. I want to thank everybody who decided that was the way to approach it rather than maybe doing something differently.

I want to focus on those schedules where some of the ongoing concerns I raised on second reading still have not been met. I want to indicate at the outset that, yes, we will be supporting the bill, but I think it's important that I put on the record the areas that are still outstanding and how I wish there could have been some other resolution to those areas.

I want to deal first with schedule B. Schedule B is amendments concerning other health professions. In this regard there were a number of changes that were made to health professions that were regulated under the NDP from 1990 to 1995, changes that, because we were opening up the act for the first time, were being made, and some others that I wish had been made. Specifically, the ones I want to focus on with respect to schedule B are those that involve the Nursing Act, 1991.

1750

We heard from both the Ontario Nurses' Association and from the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario that the proposed changes in Bill 171 with respect to the Nursing Act did not go far enough. Certainly, there was an appreciation that there is a protected title of nurse practitioner, but there were other changes that have been recommended to the government for some long time now, over a year in fact, by the College of Nurses which would allow registered nurses to participate in the health care system to their full scope of practice. In that regard, I want to read a little bit from the presentation that was made to the committee by the registered nurses' association with respect to those changes that they would have liked to have seen around prescribing. I'm quoting from their submission:

"The proposed change to the Nursing Act in Bill 171 with respect to prescriptive authority falls far short of open prescribing. It proposes moving the process from a drug-specific list to one of a category of drugs. In the end, this may prove to be more time-consuming and challenging to implement than the current model.

"CNO"—that's the College of Nurses of Ontario—"proposes open prescribing for registered nurses in the extended class. In a context of rapid technological change and evolving roles, there is compelling evidence that the current list-based approval process for the registered nurse extended class, diagnostic and prescriptive authority, is untenable. The current list-based system results

in treatment delays, unnecessary duplication and misallocation of resources.

"Open prescribing for diagnostic tests and pharmaceuticals already exists in several Canadian jurisdictions, including Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia. As of 2000, in the United States there were 25 states that gave full prescriptive authority to nurse practitioners, including four controlled substances." Therefore, the RNAO, based on legislative amendments that had been put to the government over a year ago, proposed a number of changes to expand the RN scope of practice, including:

"(1) communicating to the individual, or his or her personal representative, a diagnosis;

"(2) setting or casting a fracture of a bone or a dislocation of a joint;

"(3) applying a form of energy prescribed by the regulations under this act; and

"(4) dispensing a drug as defined in subsection 117(1) of the Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act."

As the RNAO said, "RNs should have the authority to perform these acts within the nursing scope of practice based on knowledge, skills and experience. This will ensure timely access to care, reduce the need for delegation and support progression of care management in a timely way."

It was for that reason that I put forward, on behalf of our party, amendments to the Nursing Act, 1991, which flowed from the presentation that we heard from the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario and flows from legislative changes that the College of Nurses of Ontario has had before the Ministry of Health for almost a year now.

I moved that section 14 of schedule B to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"3. Prescribing or dispensing a drug.

"3.1 Setting or casting a fracture of a bone or dislocation of a joint.

"3.2 Applying or ordering the application of a form of energy prescribed by regulation."

These would have allowed for much more open prescribing, as we were encouraged to do, and put in place two other controlled acts that nurse practitioners don't have right now, which would certainly have assisted them in the provision of their duties, be it in a community health centre or an acute care setting.

It is regrettable that the government did not move on these changes. I do not think this act will be opened again for some long time. We had an excellent opportunity with Bill 171 to take a look at changes to a number of health care professions, and indeed, the government made a number of changes to the various health care professions that had been regulated under the New Democrats. I think we missed a golden opportunity with respect to the Nursing Act in not agreeing to move on those changes that have been put forward to us both at the committee stage and to the ministry well over a year ago. I think those changes would have allowed nurse



practitioners in particular to respond in a much more timely way to the health care needs, both in the community and acute care settings. It would have been much better for patients and would have really ensured that nurse practitioners could practise to their full scope of practice. I don't know when the government's ever going to get back to this. This would have been the opportunity, and I regret certainly on behalf of nurse practitioners that these changes didn't occur, which would have allowed them to really work to the full scope of practice, as they

should do and as they need to do in Ontario now to provide the best possible health care to Ontario patients.

On that note, since I would like to be on a different schedule on another day, I will stop at this time.

**The Acting Speaker:** In the spirit of co-operation which I have seen here today, I think it's close enough to 6 of the clock. This House stands recessed until 6:45 this evening.

*The House adjourned at 1755.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
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Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

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Rosario Marchese, Bill Mauro, John O'Toole,  
Ernie Parsons, Khalil Ramal  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day



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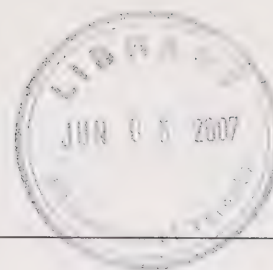
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**Monday 28 May 2007**

**Lundi 28 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 28 May 2007

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 28 mai 2007

*The House met at 1845.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### SAFER ROADS FOR A SAFER ONTARIO ACT, 2007 LOI DE 2007 VISANT À CRÉER DES ROUTES PLUS SÉCURITAIRES POUR UN ONTARIO PLUS SÛR

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 14, 2007, on the motion for third reading of Bill 203, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Remedies for Organized Crime and Other Unlawful Activities Act, 2001 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 203, Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi de 2001 sur les recours pour crime organisé et autres activités illégales et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** It's my understanding of the last time this was before the House that the debater still had some time left, but in her absence we will call for further debate.

The member from Trinity–Spadina.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** Thank you, member from Brant, a former colleague. We were both teachers. I think that's why he's clapping; he's clapping for the teaching profession.

I am happy to say a few words with respect to Bill 203, Safer Roads for a Safer Ontario Act, and I know that my colleague from Hamilton East wants to say a few words as well.

I want to start by reminding folks about some statistical information that I think people will find useful. This information comes from my colleague from Toronto–Danforth, who made a speech in this place a while ago—not too long ago. He said, “In 2001, there were almost 2,000 deaths in Canada from motor vehicle collisions. There were 24,400 hospital-related admissions that resulted from traffic collisions. Many of the victims are young. Traffic collisions are a leading cause of premature death and disability in this country. That's a big impact: thousands of people in hospitals and thousands dead from an activity and a mode of transportation that we rely on.” He added, “Vehicle occupants account for approximately three quarters of all road users killed and seriously in-

jured during the year.” Then he gives another statistic which I found very interesting: “In this study that was released in 2004, the health care costs, property losses and other factors were put together, and I assume there was an accounting model that looked at the annual cost in Canada from collisions on highways. It put the cost in the range of \$25 billion for the country as a whole.”

That I found an extraordinary figure: \$25 billion for Canada as a whole. And in Ontario it was estimated to be around \$9 billion. Collision-related accidents account for about \$3 billion was the figure that he gave. I found that astounding too in terms of the implications of bad driving, unsafe driving, drivers who drive when they're drunk, others who drive because they want to be reckless with speed racing and the like. All of this causes tremendous human damage, carnage, death—and health costs that are unbelievably high. We need to take that into account as we talk about what we need to do to get people to drive safer.

It would be nice, I would argue, if governments, provincial and federal, invested billions of dollars in transit to get people out of cars and make it easier for people to get on a streetcar, a bus or a GO train. I say we're not spending nearly as much as we ought to, as a province and as a federal government, to get people out of cars. I find that sad. I find it shameful.

### 1850

We have another interesting statistic that I read about where in 2004, by that study, there were 19 million vehicles and 21 million drivers—astounding numbers. Would that we, as a government, committed ourselves to investing a portion of those dollars in getting people out of cars and putting them in buses, subways, trains and streetcars. It would be lovely to do. Wouldn't it be lovely to be able to organize our living arrangements so that people wouldn't have to drive for kilometres to get what they need, to get their essentials? Wouldn't it be nice to get people out of their cars instead of driving for a kilometre or two or three to buy essential things such as bread, milk and butter? They've got to use a car.

It's incredible how we organize our North American societies. We pay so little attention to this kind of planning. We love to sprawl and we love to get people out so they can own two-acre lots. What an incredible waste.

So how do we deal with safer roads for a safer Ontario? How do we deal with drunk drivers? How do we deal with those who speed excessively? How do we deal with speed racing? The government came up with Bill 203, which provides for increased authority to govern and im-



pose fees for administration, impaired driving and road racing. In addition, there's authority to impose consequences when fees or penalties are not paid. We agreed. Our critic from Toronto–Danforth agrees with this.

**Impaired driving:** Bill 203 provides for increased roadside suspension of licences of impaired drivers. Police can stop vehicles and do a breath test with an approved and calibrated screening device or instrument. If a blood alcohol concentration of 50 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood is detected and indicated by a warning or an alert diagnosis, a roadside officer can suspend his or her licence. Further, the period of suspension has been increased in this bill: first offence, three days; second offence, seven days; third offence, 30 days. Further, previous suspensions will not be considered if they occurred five or more years previous, but the officer may impound the vehicle of an impaired driver at the expense of the owner of the vehicle. We agree with that too. If a conviction occurs, the licence suspension is increased to first conviction, one year; second conviction, three years; third conviction, indefinitely. An ignition interlock condition makes it easier for offenders to apply to get their licence early if they agree to a conduct review program which includes the installation of an ignition interlock device, which is a device to analyze the breath of the driver before the ignition will start, and they cannot drive any vehicle without an ignition interlock device.

**Street racing:** Street racing fines have been increased to a minimum of \$2,000 and maximum of \$10,000. Licence suspensions have been increased as well: first conviction, not more than two years, and a subsequent conviction, not more than 10 years.

All these things are intended to punish reckless driving, reckless drivers, speed racing, and all of it is okay. But the member from Toronto–Danforth argues, as I do, that we need to look beyond how we punish them once they have decided to race their cars or once they've decided to drink heavily and then drive. Yes, these will punish those drivers, but he argues, as I argue, that we need to look at how we prevent people from doing that in the first place. That's where we should be spending the billions of dollars that it costs our health care system—\$25 billion to \$30 billion in Canada, \$9 billion in Ontario—so let's say anywhere from one billion to nine billion bucks is what it costs the health care system to treat people once they are involved in dangerous collisions, to treat people with brain injuries, to treat the fact that they are paraplegic once they've been involved in an accident, to treat those for all sorts of injuries, such as spinal cord. This costs billions of dollars. If we spent a portion of the money it takes to treat people once they have been in an accident and if we found a way to convince young people that this kind of dangerous driving is going to hurt them, not just in terms of their pocket but in terms of the human, psychological consequences it will have on the person who causes the problem and on those who are victims, if we could get some of that money and convince people how tough it will be, not just for the

victims but for those who have perpetrated this crime, imagine how much better it would be in the end.

What can we do? What should we be doing? The member from Toronto–Danforth raised a good point. From a study that was done in the United States, where you have more programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous there are fewer drunk drivers on the road; there are fewer accidents as a result of it. Clearly, it is a preventive program that works, yet all too frequently in so many parts of Canada, we don't have enough of these programs. Again, all too frequently, where people are seeking assistance they don't know where to go. We don't have enough programs to help people who are in need.

We know that so many of our young people who have problems acquire these problems at an early age. Why don't we look at why it is young people become addicted to alcohol? They become addicted to alcohol at an early age because of some abuse that has happened in their home. What can we do for those families? What services can we provide to prevent that young man from committing a crime, or in this particular instance, committing a crime as it relates to a car, because they drink and they drive or because they want to race?

These are the questions we need to ask. Is it an issue of mental illness? Sometimes it is. Do we have enough adequate programs to support these young men and women who are perpetrators of these crimes? We all know we're not spending enough. We all know that since Mike Harris, God bless his soul, left us—he took \$13 billion to \$14 billion out of our provincial coffers. What do you think he left us? Big social deficits that we cannot repair any longer. He took \$13 billion away, and the provincial Liberal government is bringing in \$2.4 billion by introducing a health tax, a tax they swore they would never introduce. But in breaking a promise, they bring in \$2.4 billion, hardly enough to make up for the damage Mike Harris left us, a social deficit of \$13 billion to \$14 billion over an eight-year period. What do you think we've cut as a result of Mike Harris leaving that deficit? Health care, education and social programs—cuts that are leaving an indelible mark on all of society, and that mark is not a positive one, but a negative one. We need to bring back some dollars into our provincial coffers to be able to provide the programs young people need.

In relation to this as well, I was thinking of C.W. Jefferys high school, where the young man was just killed but a mere couple of days ago, a 14-year-old young man. It's tragic. You wonder how it happens. How does some other young man—we now find out two of his friends, probably the same age. How did they acquire the strength to pick up a gun, find a gun, illegally or otherwise, and kill another young man, who in this instance happened to be a friend? How did they do it?

**1900**

There was talk about greater security systems in our high schools, more monitoring systems, perhaps have the police in the hallway, as they do in the United States. These things are not going to prevent someone from killing someone else. It might make you feel good to say



that. It might make people feel safer that you have monitoring systems or the police nearby—if you can afford to have them, because we have fewer police today than we did 10 years ago. But I am saying that we need other preventive measures to make sure that these kids never pick up a gun.

Why is it that they pick up a gun? We don't ask those tough questions. Why is it that we don't look at why so many people who come from poverty-stricken areas commit more crimes than some others? What is it about their surroundings that makes this possible? What is it that we could do to improve their housing and make them have pride about living in a community that feels good for them, to be living in a habitable place where you don't have problems of leakages in your washrooms, or having rats or mice or cockroaches infesting your building, where buildings are crumbling because we don't have enough money to repair them? Why don't we look at that as an issue of community pride, as an issue of young men and women feeling good about not feeling bad about where they live? Why don't we look at how we give incentives to young people to make sure that they have better opportunities in our school system, to make sure they stay? Are we providing meaningful programs so kids have a desire to stay in school rather than leave? Why don't we look at programs that deal with mental illness? Because we know that there's a growing mental illness problem. Why don't we look at poverty issues? Why can't we pay young men and women, and older men and women, adequate salaries so that they don't feel so stressed out? Why don't we pay men and women an adequate salary so that they don't have to have two or three jobs and so that they can spend time with their children at home at night? Why don't we look at these social issues as a way of preventing problems from happening?

You can invest a whole lot of money to go after gangs—and you should; I have no problem with that. We have to go after gang activity and we have to go as hard as we can to stop it and to make sure we break it up. Yes, all guns should be disposed of. We should ban guns, but saying it doesn't make guns go away. Saying we should ban guns does not deal with the fact that we have 242 points of entry in Canada from the US that don't have any personnel. Why don't we deal with that? We can and should. We can and should be helpful and say, "How can we help?" rather than finding easy solutions such as, "Well, we should ban guns." That is an easy thing to say: "We should be tough on those who have guns." Yes, that is true and that is an easy thing to say, but it doesn't ban the illegal activity that happens and it doesn't ban bad behaviour. You've got to deal with the roots of bad behaviour, and I say those are rooted in the conditions in which young people find themselves. We've got to deal with that and we're not dealing with that.

This bill here is an attempt, with which I agree, to be tough on drunk drivers, to be tough on speed racing. But we have to do more as a way of making sure that we prevent kids from getting into those cars and racing; as a way of preventing young people from speeding; as a way

of getting young people and older people away from drinking and driving. Yes, we need a campaign. Yes, we need the provincial government to invest just a portion of those billions of dollars of health-related costs—take some of that and invest and convince people through public campaigns in schools and public campaigns, all over every avenue of society where people gather together to talk, and talk about why drinking and driving is a health cost that we cannot afford, that drinking and driving will kill people, that drinking and driving leaves an incredible psychological toll on the victims and the perpetrators. These campaigns work. We've seen it with smoking. It took 20 years. The anti-smoking campaign people took 20 years to convince governments to introduce legislation that made it tougher for people to smoke—and it worked.

Campaigns do work. A public campaign against drinking and driving and against speed racing works if we combine it with a desire to get to the root of the problems. For that, you've got to find out what the social problems are and how we prevent those young people from getting involved in this kind of activity that is hurtful, that kills and that is costly socially, psychologically and economically.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments? Are there any questions and comments?

Further debate? Is there any further debate?

The minister or the parliamentary assistant may wish to respond. No? Okay.

Mrs. Cansfield has moved third reading of Bill 203, An to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Remedies for Organized Crime and Other Unlawful Activities Act, 2001 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

There being more than five, please call in the members. There will be a 30-minute bell.

Oh, no, there won't. I have received a notice.

"To the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly:

"Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the motion by Minister Cansfield for third reading of Bill 203, An to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Remedies for Organized Crime and Other Unlawful Activities Act, 2001 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts be deferred until the time of deferred votes on May 29, 2007."

It is signed by the chief government whip.

It will be deferred until that time.

Orders of the day.

**Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker:** Is it the agreement of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

*The House adjourned at 1908.*



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Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior- Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton</b> (L) Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation	Timiskaming–Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David</b> (L) Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim</b> (L) Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Ottawa–Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George</b> (L) Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / vice-premier ministre, ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Ottawa–Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine</b> (L) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Toronto–Danforth	Tabuns, Peter (ND)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Trinity–Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Parkdale–High Park	DiNovo, Cheri (ND)	Vaughan–King–Aurora	<b>Sorbara, Hon. / L'hon. Greg</b> (L) Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Parry Sound–Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Waterloo–Wellington	<b>Arnott, Ted</b> (PC) First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Perth–Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Whitby–Ajax	Elliott, Christine (PC)
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)	Willowdale	Zimmer, David (L)
Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra</b> (L) Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Prince Edward–Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Windsor–St. Clair	<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight</b> (L) Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Yakubski, John (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte</b> (L) Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Sarnia–Lambton	<b>Di Cocco, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline</b> (L) Minister of Culture / ministre de la Culture	York North / York-Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	Ferreira, Paul (ND)
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	York West / York-Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V.</b> (L) Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse		
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)		
Scarborough–Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry</b> (L) Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux		
Scarborough–Rouge River	Balkissoon, Bas (L)		
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)		
Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St. Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J.</b> (L) Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, government House leader / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées, leader parlementaire du gouvernement		
St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael</b> (L) Attorney General / procureur général		
Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.



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Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Tuesday 29 May 2007

Mardi 29 mai 2007

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 29 May 2007

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 29 mai 2007

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I rise in the House because of the loss of 137,000 well-paying Ontario manufacturing jobs under this government's watch.

In a riding with a proud tradition of employment and innovation and the auto sector, Durham residents are deeply concerned. CAW local president Chris Buckley has said that 21% of manufacturing jobs in the Oshawa area alone have disappeared. This is a loss of over 7,000 good-paying jobs.

Durham residents have raised the awareness about job loss this past Sunday with a rally in Oshawa. More than 38,000 attended a similar rally in Windsor as well.

The loss of manufacturing jobs affects communities and families across Ontario. Families and businesses are concerned over this government's lack of a plan and lack of leadership on an important economic issue. They know that McGuinty's high spending is chasing jobs and families out of Ontario. They're looking for Dalton McGuinty's government to act now, before it's too late.

The evidence is clear: Dana Corp. lost 80 jobs in December 2005 and, later, 537 jobs in December, 100 jobs in August 2006 and 90 additional jobs in September 2006. Dura Corp. as well had 280 job losses in August 2006 and 356 in April 2007. GM has lost over 1,000 jobs, Ford over 1,000 and Chrysler over 1,000—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

#### SLEEPING GIANT LANDMARK

**Mr. Bill Mauro (Thunder Bay–Atikokan):** The CBC is searching for the Seven Wonders of Canada and has short-listed 52 nominees, including a magnificent one from Thunder Bay that has my enthusiastic vote.

The Sibley Peninsula, or the Sleeping Giant, as it's known in Thunder Bay, is a natural rock peninsula in the shape of a giant sleeping person. The peninsula is a beautiful place to explore, with Sleeping Giant Provincial Park, the mountain trails and Silver Islet being three of many places to visit. The rock juts into Lake Superior and frames Thunder Bay.

There are many stories around this landmark. One Ojibway legend identifies the giant as Nanabijou, who

turned to stone when the secret location of a rich silver mine, now known as Silver Islet, was disclosed to settlers.

It is a most incredible sight. Majestic and mysterious, it brings a sense of peace to those who view it. This land is truly a wonder. The Sleeping Giant represents a calmness which most of us could use in our lives today.

As Thunder Bay's Eric Vander Wal, one of the CBC viewers who nominated the Sleeping Giant, said, "When viewed across Thunder Bay, the figure of a man stretched across the horizon is unmistakable: a man who has protected the voyagers en route to Fort William, or the sailors and salties bearing Canada's bread basket grain from Prince Arthur's Landing. Whether hiking through the cool air under the boreal forests, swimming in the waters that lap at its shores or climbing across his chest, the Sleeping Giant offers a majesty greater than any mountain pass or ocean vista. And surely must be counted among Canada's great natural wonders."

I agree and urge one and all to vote on the CBC website by the May 31 deadline to ensure that Thunder Bay's Sleeping Giant takes its rightful place as one of Canada's seven wonders.

#### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo–Wellington):** Sylvia Jones in Dufferin-Caledon, Michael Harris in Kitchener-Conestoga, and John Rutherford in Perth-Wellington, as well as the rest of John Tory's team, understand that we need to do more to protect our manufacturing jobs.

Two years ago this very week, I tabled a motion in this House which called upon the finance committee to begin public hearings on the competitiveness of our manufacturing industries. I was motivated to bring this forward because I was concerned that without immediate provincial government action, we would lose many manufacturing jobs. I envisioned that these hearings could take place in the summer of 2005, leading to an action plan that would protect those good-paying jobs for Ontario families.

My resolution had the express support of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, Canada's Chemical Producers, the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, the C.D. Howe Institute, the Employers' Advocacy Council, the Ontario Real Estate Association, and the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce.

While the McGuinty Liberal government dithered on this emerging crisis, Ontario has lost more than 137,000 manufacturing jobs since 2005. Last month alone, the



Ontario economy hemorrhaged 13,000 factory jobs. These statistics are not just cold numbers; they are people who've lost good jobs, and most are unlikely to find similar work which pays as well as the jobs they've lost. We're talking about families who are facing severe hardship because of this government's policy of sticking its collective head in the sand and ignoring prudent warnings that our caucus brought into this House two years ago and have been raising ever since.

This afternoon the House should stand united in support of opposition day motion 5. Let's not wait until October to send a signal to the world that Ontario is open for business—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Members' statements?

#### HUNTER'S SYNDROME

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** Andrew Lanese is a 10-year-old boy who lives down in Fonthill with his folks, Nick and Sonia. Andrew is one of less than 24 people in this country who suffers from Hunter's syndrome. What that has meant is that he has suffered a dramatic regression in mental capacity as a result of this rare genetic disorder.

There was no hope for kids like Andrew or their families until 2006, when the US Food and Drug Administration approved a drug called Elaprase. Elaprase is an enzyme replacement therapy that improves the quality of life for people like Andrew suffering from Hunter's syndrome. It's not available in Canada, so the Lanese family applied to the Health Canada special access program. Health Canada considers the drug appropriate enough to authorize its use here in Canada, but it's very expensive. And here's the Catch-22: Health Canada authorizes its use in Canada; OHIP in Ontario won't pay for the drug and the treatments. And we're talking about hundreds of thousands, possibly millions, of dollars.

This isn't opening floodgates. As I told you, less than 24 people in this whole country are suffering from this rare disorder. I'm calling upon this government to give Andrew some hope for the rest of his life by permitting payment by OHIP for this treatment.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS NORTHWEST

**Mr. Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay–Superior North):** I'm pleased to have the opportunity today to inform the Legislature about a new organization in my community, one that promotes a vision where all people with developmental challenges are treated equally, given the opportunity to live a self-chosen life and, as a result, enjoy inclusion in society.

Human Rights Northwest consists of family members, advocates, staff workers and members from the community, especially those knowledgeable in rights issues. Its mission is to provide rights protection to persons with developmental challenges, supported by agencies within the jurisdiction of their mandate.

It is often said that a society is judged by how it treats its most vulnerable. Certainly Human Rights Northwest is there to test that standard, and I for one am grateful for their existence. As the brother of a man with developmental challenges, one who is strongly supported by Community Living Thunder Bay, I am deeply conscious of the value of this newly formed organization. Recently, I attended a supper hosted by Human Rights Northwest—an opportunity, as I saw it, to better understand the goals of the group and to offer my support. Our thanks should go to Mel and Edna Hogan, the driving force behind this group, and all of the people who are working with them. Congratulations as well to my friend Reggie Duncan, who faces his daily challenges with a spirit that lifts the heart. Reggie provided the music that evening and is keen to offer his services across the community.

So hats off to the people behind this great movement in our community. And if I may end my statement with a commercial plug: Please check out Rockin' Reggie's DJ Productions.

1340

#### SMITHS FALLS ECONOMY

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** I rise today on behalf 9,200 people at Smiths Falls, a town where more than 1,500 people will be losing their jobs by the end of 2009. In the last budget, the McGuinty government announced the redevelopment of the local hospital. Unfortunately, despite highlighting this project in the budget, the McGuinty government has not been in touch with local officials to get anything started. They're ready to put the tender out and nothing has happened since the budget. This adds insult to injury.

When the McGuinty government announced the accelerated closing of the Rideau Regional Centre by 2009, they promised to help the community adapt to the economic impact of the closure, but no help has come forward. In February, Hershey's announced that its plant would be closing. Since then, Premier Dalton McGuinty has yet to visit Smiths Falls to offer his support to the community. Our leader, John Tory, and the leader of the third party, Howard Hampton, both have visited Smiths Falls. In addition to the 1,500 people who have lost their jobs, about 100 people who work at OPP's eastern regional headquarters, located on the same grounds as the RRC, don't know what's going to happen to them.

Does the McGuinty government care at all? Why don't they help? Does the McGuinty government have any heart at all? Smiths Falls and many manufacturing towns like it need some gleam of hope. We've got to help these towns out.

#### ANNIVERSARY OF SCOUTS CANADA

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe):** I rise in the House today to congratulate the London area Scouts on their wonderful event on Saturday, May 26, the celebration of Scouts Canada's centennial anniversary. This event was a true reflection of the wonderful work that

Scouts Canada has done within communities across London, Ontario and Canada for 100 years.

It's amazing to know that the principles that Lord Baden-Powell instilled in youth a century ago continue to inspire Scouts Canada's great organization. The principles of scouting are a combination of personal challenges, outdoor activities and service to communities as well as teaching individual responsibility. I believe that these are important principles that our youth, adolescents and adults should have.

I know Scouts has brought friendship, fun and adventure to my riding of London-Fanshawe. Whether it be through their programs for youth, adolescents or adults, Scouts Canada is an organization that brings people together and creates lifelong friendships.

The celebration on Saturday was a wonderful chance for me to see firsthand the family-like community that Scouts Canada creates wherever it goes. Scouts Canada has made, and continues to make, real contributions in creating a better world for all of us to live.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Scouts organization for their generosity and dedication and to wish volunteers, members, leaders and their families all the best on the special occasion of the Scouts centennial celebration.

## ÉCOLE CATHOLIQUE JEANNE SAUVÉ

### JEANNE SAUVÉ CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**M. John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex):** L'école Jeanne Sauvé est une école catholique qui offre un programme d'immersion de langue française à partir de la première année. Les élèves étudient la plupart des matières en français. Étant donné l'amélioration rapide et constante du rendement scolaire de ses élèves, l'école Jeanne Sauvé se classe dans le premier pourcentage des meilleures écoles de l'Ontario.

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome the grade 7 class of Jeanne Sauvé Catholic school from my hometown of Stratford, and in particular I'd like to welcome my youngest son, Breen, and all of his classmates: Welcome to the Legislature.

I'd also like to applaud the students of Jeanne Sauvé for their participation in the Ministry of Education's healthy schools program. One of the many schools to take up the government's challenge, the students at Jeanne Sauvé are leading the way. Students, teachers, principals, parents and community partners are all involved in the effort. Students at Jeanne Sauvé will be serving as youth health ambassadors, planning a healthy eating workshop to present to each class.

The increased funding that the publicly funded school boards have received is making dramatic differences right across Ontario in our classrooms. Once again, I am glad to have Jeanne Sauvé here to tour the Legislature today en français. Maybe I should have hitched a ride this morning on the bus.

## NURSES

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** I rise today to speak of something of great importance to all Ontarians: health care and nurses. The McGuinty government takes pride in our front-line health care workers. We've fulfilled our commitment in hiring 8,000 new nurses and in fact will surpass that target. We have invested in equipment such as bed lifts to help, literally, take the strain off our nurses, and most recently we've announced new nurses grad guarantees that will ensure full-time employment to graduating nurses.

We've made progress, but the Tories want to take us back. Don't just take my word for it. Today in the National Post, the Ontario Nurses' Association noted their concern on the Tories plan, where they stated unequivocally that they do not support Mr. Tory's approach. The Ontario Nurses' Association is referring to last week's announcement of John Tory's health care agenda, where they tried to slip this health care agenda under the radar in a low-profile event, hoping no one would notice.

The Tory health care agenda is a blueprint for taking us back: back to the days of cuts, back to the days of damage, back to the days of neglect. Don't just take my word for that either. The Toronto Star, the Globe and Mail, the Sudbury Star, the Cornwall Standard Freeholder, the Owen Sound Sun Times and the Orillia Packet and Times have now all questioned Mr. Tory's health care agenda with headlines such as, "Promise Hard to Accept," "Unhealthy Calculations," and "Tory's Stand on Health Tax Wrong-headed."

I know my constituents stand by the progress we've made in health care in our community. We won't let Mr. Tory take us back.

## VISITORS

**Mr. Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to welcome Carson Cross, his daughter Chelsea and his son Alex to the Legislature. Carson is a Belleville professional firefighter who also owns his own fire truck, though that's not yet a job requirement in the city of Belleville. Carson uses the trucks for charity, for children's events, for anything to support the community, and I applaud him in being here today.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I rise today to introduce and welcome supporters of my new private member's bill. Those people being present are: Stan Buell, president of the Small Investor Protection Association; Art Field, president of the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation; Judy Muzzi, past president of the United Senior Citizens of Ontario; and Pamela Reeve, a member of the investor advisory committee of the Ontario Securities Commission. They are here to see the Legislature in its full flower. Welcome.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm asking members of the



Legislature to welcome Annette Mayes, the mother of page Brianna Mayes, along with Pauline Montminy, the aunt of Brianna Mayes, who is the page captain today.

**Mr. Bill Mauro (Thunder Bay–Atikokan):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to welcome to the Legislature today, sitting in the members' east gallery, visiting from Atikokan, Lisa and Jolene Beauregard.

#### RELEASE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg to inform the House that pursuant to section 28 of the Auditor General Act, I have today laid upon the table the audited financial statements of the Office of the Auditor General for the year ended March 31, 2006.

1350

#### LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg the indulgence of the House to permit the pages to assemble for introduction. First off, we have Rebecca Alter from Don Valley West, Elizabeth Amos from Mississauga Centre, Elizabeth Arif from Thunder Bay–Atikokan, Liam Brown from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, Darren Cole from Toronto–Danforth, Justine Fletcher from Haliburton–Victoria–Brock, Faith Fraser from Nickel Belt, Laura Fluegel from Sarnia–Lambton, Joel Gamble from Scarborough–Agincourt, Stefan Gemnay from Kitchener–Waterloo, Grant Goldberg from York Centre, Jacqueline Janas from Hamilton Mountain, Joe Kyte from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, Brianna Mayes from Niagara Centre, Shea McConkey from Brant, Spencer McInnis from Chatham–Kent–Essex, Andrew McIntyre from Ottawa–Orléans, Hannah Nicholls–Harrison from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Justin Stevenson from Essex, Katie Toogood from York North, Colin Tufts from Halton and Graham Tunmer from Niagara Falls. Please help me welcome our new pages.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker:** Back to work.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on general government and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 212, An Act to amend the Education Act in respect of behaviour, discipline and safety / *Projet de loi 212, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation en ce qui concerne le comportement, la discipline et la sécurité.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 1, 2007, the bill—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** I'm sorry? The bill is ordered for third reading.

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot):** My apologies, Speaker. I thought you were going to forget one of the most important standing committees; they're all important.

I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 218, An Act to amend the Election Act and the Election Finances Act and make related amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 218, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale et la Loi sur le financement des élections et apportant des modifications connexes à d'autres lois.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Pursuant to the standing orders, this bill is ordered for third reading.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### 716056 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2007

Mr. Miller moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill Pr36, An Act to revive 716056 Ontario Limited.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

##### ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH (TORONTO) ACT, 2007

Mr. Zimmer moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill Pr37, An Act respecting St. Andrew's Congregation of The United Church of Canada at Toronto.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

##### CONRAD BLACK EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION ABUSE ACT, 2007 LOI CONRAD BLACK DE 2007 SUR L'INDEMNISATION ABUSIVE DES MEMBRES DE LA DIRECTION

Mr. Prue moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill 230, An Act to amend the Business Corporations Act to provide protections against executive

compensation abuse / Projet de loi 230, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sociétés par actions afin de prévoir des protections contre l'indemnisation abusive des membres de la direction.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** The Business Corporations Act, also called the Conrad Black act in short, is amended to add provisions respecting compensation of executives. Provisions are added requiring that a vote on executive compensation be held at every annual meeting of shareholders of a company that offers securities to the public. The act is also amended to provide that if certain executives do not meet any job performance standards to which their compensation is related, they must pay back a portion of that compensation.

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I'd like to inform the House and the members that we have with us today in the Speaker's gallery a delegation from Westminster, the United Kingdom. We have Austin Mitchell, Ann Cryer, Jeffrey Ennis, Roger Godsiff and Lord Rogan. Please help me welcome our guests.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to draw the attention of the House to the family of Rebecca Alter, one of our pages from Don Valley West. Matthew Alter, Simone Alter, Ethan Alter, Daniel Alter, Gerald Gold and Helen Bustillo join us in the gallery. Welcome.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I definitely have a motion, a long-awaited, long-anticipated motion. I move that, notwithstanding any other order of the House, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 29, 2007, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1358 to 1403.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Members please take their seats.

All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Bentley, Christopher  
Bradley, James J.  
Brotten, Laurel C.  
Brownell, Jim  
Bryant, Michael  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Caplan, David  
Chan, Michael  
Colle, Mike  
Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Dombrowsky, Leona  
Duguid, Brad

Duncan, Dwight  
Fonseca, Peter  
Gerretsen, John  
Gravelle, Michael  
Hoy, Pat  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Kular, Kuldip  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Levac, Dave  
Marsales, Judy  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Parsons, Ernie

Patten, Richard  
Peters, Steve  
Phillips, Gerry  
Racco, Mario G.  
Ramal, Khalil  
Ramsay, David  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Takhar, Harinder S.  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Wilkinson, John  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Zimmer, David

**The Speaker:** Those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Nays

Arnott, Ted  
Chudleigh, Ted  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Ferreira, Paul  
Horwath, Andrea

Kormos, Peter  
MacLeod, Lisa  
Martel, Shelley  
Miller, Norm  
O'Toole, John

Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Prue, Michael  
Tabuns, Peter  
Tascona, Joseph N.  
Wilson, Jim

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 53; the nays are 15.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### COMMUNITIES IN ACTION FUND FONDS COLLECTIVITÉS ACTIVES

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** Our government is committed to providing Ontarians with access to sport and recreation activities regardless of their age, ability or income. The communities in action fund is a part of our physical activities strategy which aims to increase the level of physical activity among Ontarians so that by the year 2010, 55% of Ontarians are physically active enough to benefit their health. It is estimated that physical inactivity in our health care system costs billions of dollars. The CIAF is working in our communities to provide access to sport, recreation and physical activity programs for Ontarians who otherwise may not have a chance to participate. Part of the program's mandate is to support at-risk youth, and to support them where it matters most: in their own communities. We are working to keep kids safe and ensure that positive options are available after school.

Dans les trois dernières années du gouvernement McQuinty, les subventions du fonds collectivités actives ont permis de financer un large éventail de programmes; par exemple, des programmes destinés aux autochtones, des programmes d'activités physiques pour les aînés et



les programmes de sports habituels comme le basket-ball, le « soccer », la natation et le cyclisme, de même que d'autres sports et activités moins courants comme la pratique de la planche à roulette et le tai-chi.

In the first three years, approximately 548 local and provincial organizations received funding, and these grants have helped approximately one million Ontarians of all ages and backgrounds to get active. Now, for a fourth year, the communities in action fund is helping even more Ontarians to get active.

I'm pleased to note that last week we announced funding to 14 provincial and over 200 local organizations who are receiving communities in action fund grants. Thanks to an additional allocation of \$2.5 million from the provincial budget in March, the fund for 2007-08 becomes a \$7.5-million program.

That means we have reopened the application process so that we can provide funding to even more organizations that will create and enhance new opportunities for physical activity, community sport and recreation. These additional funds will help to address the annual oversubscription rate of approximately \$10 million in demand. With this year's investment, the McQuinty government has invested over \$23 million in local and provincial organizations across Ontario through this important program.

1410

Two weeks ago, I met with several grant recipient organizations at First Avenue school with my colleague Richard Patten, and my parliamentary assistant, Peter Fonseca, met with others in Toronto. Recipients in attendance included:

—The Ontario division of the Canadian Association for Disabled Skiing. Their grant will provide training to volunteer instructors to help in their adaptive ski program and expand it to six ski resorts throughout central and western Ontario.

—International Fun and Team Athletics Canada Inc. received a grant to implement their youth soccer skills and fitness programs in schools, clubs and communities for over 25,000 children across the province.

—Clean Air Champions are implementing the Clean Air Achievers and Stepping Ahead programs. Clean Air Achievers is a program that targets students in grades 7, 8 and 9 to adopt practices and lifestyles that enhance both environmental and personal health. The program explores transportation choices and the resulting impacts on air quality, climate change and health. Students achieve measurable results to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by choosing active transportation and influencing others to become more physically active.

The Cycle Alliance of Ontario received a grant to implement a program in 26 communities across Ontario. KidFit will work to get more elementary school children active by encouraging them to ride their bikes to school.

The Ontario Minor Roller Hockey Association will be using the grant they are receiving to implement Getting Girls in the Game. This program will help to

introduce 500 girls in southern Ontario to the sport of roller hockey.

—Parks and Recreation Ontario is receiving two grants. The first grant will be used to develop a community volunteer enhancement and engagement strategy to provide increased support for volunteers and volunteerism. With their second grant, PRO plans to replicate a study that was done in 1996 about the benefits of community recreation and parks services in Ontario. This will allow for a comparison over time related to changes in leisure attitudes, as well as perceived benefits of parks, recreation and physical activity.

—York University's school of kinesiology and health science is receiving a grant that will enable them to provide higher levels of physical activity among ethnically diverse groups by providing additional resources and training new community change agents.

Our investments in these organizations help them to provide critical programming to children and youth, to aboriginal communities, to low-income families, to older adults, to visible ethnic minorities, to people with disabilities and to all Ontarians. We want to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to keep fit.

Je tiens à féliciter ces organismes sans but lucratif—nos partenaires en sport, en activité physique, en loisirs et en santé. Nous devons continuer à collaborer avec ces organismes par l'intermédiaire de programmes tels que le fonds collectivités actives.

In conclusion, I am pleased that the McQuinty government has increased funding to the 2007-08 communities in action fund program, and I want to inform all members that new applications are now being accepted for a second wave of funding. Please encourage your local organizations to apply by June 15. Application instructions can be found on my ministry's website, which is [www.mhp.gov.on.ca](http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca).

Our investment in community organizations like those funded by the communities in action fund will enable the Ontario government to make significant progress towards the goal of a healthier Ontario.

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** I'm pleased to update the House on another important step this government is taking to provide the best possible consumer protection. We have now set the date, and as of October 1, 2007, cash-equivalent gift cards will never expire. This change will make Ontario the first province in Canada—the first province—to eliminate expiry dates on cash-equivalent gift cards. Consumers told us they wanted clear rules surrounding gift cards and gift certificates. We have listened, and we are delivering.

This is an issue of fairness. When people buy or receive a cash-equivalent gift card, they think they are getting just that: cash. And I'll give you an example. If you find a \$20 bill in a jacket you haven't worn for a



while, it's still worth \$20, even if you find it two or three years later. No one would say to you, "I'm sorry; that's an old \$20 bill and there's an expiry date." That's why we're taking these measures. It just makes sense. No one should lose money just because they haven't had a chance to spend it or because they haven't found something they want to buy yet. That is why we are doing this.

On October 1, 2007, this law will ban expiry dates on gift cards and also eliminate the fees, such as dormancy fees or activation fees, which erode the value of the card over time.

Also, consumers will be protected by new rules over disclosure. On October 1, 2007, we are requiring the clear and prominent disclosure of any terms and conditions related to a gift card at the point of purchase.

This is a law whose time has clearly come. Gift cards are, as we all know, a major part now of the retail economy and they're here to stay. Virtually every major Canadian retailer offers a gift card, and they have become commonplace for shoppers. I might add that roughly 80% still have an expiry date on them. We're going to fix that.

Sales of gift cards in Ontario have risen significantly in the last few years to become a multi-billion dollar industry. To make sure Ontario has the best protection for consumers, we are continuing to work with stakeholders on shopping mall cards. Mall cards, things like an Eaton Centre card, will still be covered and will not be allowed to have an expiry date. However, these cards can temporarily maintain their current fee structure while we work with them to examine options on how best to regulate these types of cards. This will allow more time to develop an approach that strikes the right balance for consumers and business.

One exception I must point out to the expiry date ban is prepaid phone cards. The reason is, they are federally regulated and Ontario's new law cannot cover them. They will continue to exist under the rules as they now are.

I want to emphasize that these changes which the McGuinty government is bringing in are fair to consumers and, I might add, fair to business. In moving forward with our changes, we have had support from a wide range of stakeholders, including the Consumers Council of Canada and the Retail Council of Canada. Their input has been invaluable on this process and I would like to thank all of them for their insight.

These provisions are part of a series of measures that make Ontario a leader in consumer protection. We're proud of this standing and we are continuing to work hard to ensure that consumers and businesses alike benefit. When Ontarians buy a gift card on or after October 1, 2007, they will have peace of mind, knowing that the card will always be as good as the day they bought it.

## TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Transportation):** I rise in the House today to tell you that my

ministry is hosting the first-ever sustainable transportation conference, TransForum, the first of its kind in 90 years, to help create a cleaner environment. As I said, this has never been done in the province before in its history.

TransForum began yesterday at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. It's being attended by leading thinkers in the field of transportation from across North America and Europe. We're showcasing the latest research and the latest technology that will help us build a world-class transportation system. We're drawing out the best thinkers and we're seeking innovative ideas that we can implement right here in Ontario.

Our government is committed to building a more sustainable transportation system that supports the needs of today while protecting the environment for future generations. We are working to reduce traffic congestion, smog and greenhouse gas emissions, and TransForum is a key step. As we all know, our roads and our highways are busy, and often they are gridlocked, which costs our economy billions of dollars every year. There are health costs associated with pollution generated by idling cars and trucks on our highways. And let's not forget the social costs. This government does not want people spending hours in their cars, simply because that's time they'll never get to spend with their children, their friends or their spouses. Around the world, standards of living are partly measured by the degree to which citizens can get around, and we must think to the future. Over the next 25 years, here in Ontario's greater Golden Horseshoe, we are expecting another 3.8 million people. That means we must act today for a better tomorrow.

This government believes that a sustainable transportation system must balance all transportation modes, including air, rail, road, marine and public transit. We need to make the connection to fuse modes of transportation. We can't build a system in isolation.

### 1420

In the interests of sustainability, we are also shifting the focus away from creating more highways to using our highways better. High-occupancy vehicle lanes, or HOV lanes, are a big part of that. We've invested over \$127 million to build the first provincial HOV lanes on Highway 403 and Highway 404—both are southbound—to reduce emissions by encouraging car pooling and transit use.

Last Thursday, I announced our province's ambitious plan to create a connected HOV lane network. We're adding over 450 kilometres of new HOV lanes on the 400 series highways in the greater Golden Horseshoe.

I'm proud to say we've also looked in our own backyard. My ministry is working to make its operations more sustainable by converting all of the Ministry of Transportation traffic signals to high-efficiency LED lamps and saving enough energy to continuously light almost 12,000 100-watt light bulbs for one year; making 100% of all reclaimed pavement available to ministry contractors who repair and build roads across Ontario; and we have converted the Fort Erie truck inspection station



building to solar power to help reduce energy consumption.

But more than anything, public transit is the cornerstone of a sustainable transportation system. GO Transit has become the backbone of an inter-regional transit system in the greater Toronto area and Hamilton. It served over 48 million riders in 2006-07. I was honoured to be part of GO's 40th anniversary celebrations last week. Since 2003, we have invested almost \$1.8 billion in GO Transit, including \$457 million this year alone, making GO a better service for its commuters. These investments have made more frequent, comfortable and reliable service, provided by cleaner-burning buses and locomotives, a reality.

We're also making transit more convenient by partnering with nine municipal transit agencies in the greater Toronto area and Hamilton to deliver a single fare collection system.

We've delivered on our commitment to pump a share of the provincial gas tax into public transit right across this province. This year we are giving municipalities \$313 million in gas tax funding. That means expanded service and many new, more comfortable and accessible buses right across Ontario.

We're encouraging commuters to choose transit by providing \$1.6 billion in gas tax funding by 2010 to municipalities for public transit.

I'm pleased and delighted to say that these investments are paying off. Since 2003, municipal ridership in Ontario has increased by over 65 million passenger trips, in essence removing 54 million car trips from our roadways. GO Transit has increased about 10% over the last few years, or 4.4 million more passenger trips. Total GO ridership this year is expected to be around 51 million people.

Getting more people out of their cars and onto public transit means, in the end, we're all breathing cleaner air, we're burning less fuel and we are reducing gridlock. In short, TransForum, the convention, will help us change the way we think about transportation as we move forward to create a better future. It's about innovation; it's about managing transportation challenges, but managing them strategically. I'm very excited about this groundbreaking conference and look forward to taking what we learn and making transportation in Ontario better for future generations to come.

#### COMMUNITIES IN ACTION FUND

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** I'd like to respond to the minister responsible for Liberal promotion. He spoke today about the communities in action fund giving out approximately \$7.5 million per year. I congratulate all of the groups that received funding under this particular program. But it's only the Liberal government that could create two agencies to do essentially the same thing: the Trillium Foundation and the communities in action fund. The Trillium fund gives

out over \$100 million a year, save and except for the first year, when this government cut them back \$5 million from that \$100 million. Why wouldn't you give the \$7.5 million to the Trillium Foundation to increase their funding capabilities to \$107.5 million? The same groups would receive the same amount of money, but the administration would be much less.

I'll tell you the reason why this doesn't happen: because the photo ops are not nearly as good for the government under the Trillium Foundation as they are under the communities in action fund. If a Trillium Foundation grant is given in my riding, I am called to appear when the presentation is made, as is each member in each riding. When a communities in action fund grant is given, I'm not given the same courtesy as an opposition member and called. Therefore, a member of the government shows up in my riding, giving an amount of funding to a group in my riding—double administration, less fairness with regard to MPPs and courtesy to all members of this Legislature, whether they're on the government side or the opposition side.

#### CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):** I respond to Minister Phillips's statement on gift card expiry dates. The only expiry date Ontarians are interested in is October 10, the date when the McGuinty Liberals will be turfed from office as a result of their dismal record and John Tory elected Premier.

The McGuinty Liberals have record high job losses in the manufacturing sector. Some 38,000 people gathered in Windsor on Sunday demanding a job strategy from their failed MPPs, Duncan and Papatello; the McGuinty Liberals' failed record on the environment—broken promises on discontinuing coal emissions and removing lead from our water; and the McGuinty Liberals' granddaddy of all broken promises, increasing taxes by imposing the health tax on the hard-working men and women in this province.

The expiry date for the McGuinty Liberals of October 10 could not come sooner for Ontarians. On October 10, John Tory will be Ontario's next Premier.

#### TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I'm responding—*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Minister of Economic Development and Trade, I will not warn you again.

Member for Durham.

**Mr. O'Toole:** I'm responding to the Minister of Transportation on her sustainable transportation plan. Quite frankly, it's hard to know where to start. When I

look at it, I say that they have no plan right from the beginning.

Aside from the promise to roll back tolls on Highway 407 in their election document, it took 299 days for us to get the information, and yet they spent tonnes of money in legal fees and never solved the problem. Ask yourselves the questions.

They have no plan to deal with gridlock or congestion. In fact, if you look at the most recent response to the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority, it's another failed plan, providing no funding. It indeed is stuck in gridlock.

1430

I have moved an amendment to Bill 203, which will be voted on later today—in fact, it should be renamed the Frank Klees Road Safety Bill, because all of the legislation in Bill 203 comes from the former Minister of Transportation, Frank Klees. Quite frankly, I have yet to find a real plan from this government, to not just deal with gridlock, but when you look at the broad issues facing the economy, much of it's to do with the slow and grinding pace on our highways. The Windsor border issue is still outstanding. The 407 east expansion, the most important aspect of transportation for Durham—nothing's happening.

It's clear that they need to consult with experts, and one of those experts would be John Tory. We've had around-the-province consultations on gridlock.

I can tell you that this government is a failed government when it comes to having a plan. When you look at the roadways, when you look at the sight of the roadways, when you look at the plan, the HOV lanes that were talked about last week—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Responses?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** I rise to respond to the comments from the Minister of Transportation. The minister gamely continues to go on talking about sustainable transportation, but I think we need to look at some recent developments.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Tabuns:** I always take that as a sign that they're in trouble, but keep going.

What we had in March were announcements of highway expansions and widenings, and those expansions, those widenings, were denounced by environmental speakers, environmental representatives in this province, because they know what those announcements mean: They mean more sprawl, more congestion and more paralysis. That is the direction this government is going in. That is the strategy this government has. There cannot be a sustainable transportation system if you continue to feed sprawl, and that's what those March announcements were about.

A few days ago, the minister announced a big expansion of high-occupancy vehicle lanes, between 2017 and 2031. That's a promise not for this election or the next election, but the one after that. In IT terms, it's vapourware; it's not even software.

Given that, one must note as well that the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority, which was set up with great fanfare by this government to plan transportation, to plan transit, was quoted in the *Star* the other day. The headline: "Transit Czars Chafe at Queen's Park." All these wonderful folks who were brought in to plan transit and transportation weren't in the loop, weren't told a thing. The quote from the regional chair for Durham: "If they're going to spend all the money before we see it, I'd like to know what the plan is." Good quote, because he knows that, more than anything, what we have is GO Transit with a new board, a new title and a little decoration.

If this government is interested in real, sustainable transportation, the puffery has to end and we have to put real authority and resources into transit.

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** In response to the Minister of Government Services: Another day, another feel-good announcement. Show empathy and do absolutely nothing, but promise that you might make some changes in the future.

I have some questions of the minister. Why do you have to examine the options that you're so proud of examining? Why do consumers who have paid cold, hard cash in good faith have to wait? What balance is needed to express the rights of consumers who have paid to the maximum the value of those cards? Would that the government could answer those questions instead of asking consumers to wait. Would that the government could act with such dispatch when something is really important.

As limited as the announcement is today, it pales in comparison to your do-nothing policy in terms of those people who have bought new homes. Look at the case of new homebuyers. Look at what you responded to yesterday in this very House. You are saying today that you want to protect people who have maybe put out \$100 for a credit card, but you said yesterday that you want to do virtually nothing for those who have spent \$300,000 or \$400,000 or \$500,000 in the purchase of a new home. Just as you're going to study this \$100 problem, you're going to study the bigger one to death. This is a study, in one case, of a procedure that needs no study at all, that people who have spent the \$100 need to have that \$100 protected. In the alternative, for those who have bought new homes you have chosen to do nothing, when what has happened to them cries out in the very strongest terms for redress.

This is a government that is hell-bent on making announcement after announcement to make people feel good, but a government that, at the same time, chooses to do absolutely nothing when, as a minister and as a government, you have the power to make the change. You have the power, and all you choose to do is to study it. All you choose is to obfuscate and to put off to another day what needs to be done here today. That is a government that has failed.



## DEFERRED VOTES

SAFER ROADS FOR  
A SAFER ONTARIO ACT, 2007  
LOI DE 2007 VISANT À CRÉER  
DES ROUTES PLUS SÉCURITAIRES  
POUR UN ONTARIO PLUS SÛR

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 203, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Remedies for Organized Crime and Other Unlawful Activities Act, 2001 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 203, Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi de 2001 sur les recours pour crime organisé et autres activités illégales et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1436 to 1441.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

## Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Peters, Steve
Arthurs, Wayne	Horwath, Andrea	Phillips, Gerry
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoy, Pat	Prue, Michael
Barrett, Toby	Hudak, Tim	Pupatello, Sandra
Bartolucci, Rick	Jeffrey, Linda	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bentley, Christopher	Klees, Frank	Racco, Mario G.
Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Ramal, Khalil
Bountrogianni, Marie	Kular, Kuldip	Ramsay, David
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Rinaldi, Lou
Broten, Laurel C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Runciman, Robert W.
Brownell, Jim	Levac, Dave	Ruprecht, Tony
Bryant, Michael	MacLeod, Lisa	Sandals, Liz
Cansfield, Donna H.	Marchese, Rosario	Savoline, Joyce
Caplan, David	Marsales, Judy	Scott, Laurie
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Martel, Shelley	Smith, Monique
Chan, Michael	Matthews, Deborah	Smitherman, George
Chudleigh, Ted	Mauro, Bill	Sterling, Norman W.
Colle, Mike	McGuinty, Dalton	Tabuns, Peter
Crozier, Bruce	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Tascona, Joseph N.
Dhillon, Vic	Miller, Norm	Tory, John
Di Cocco, Caroline	Milloy, John	Van Bommel, Maria
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mitchell, Carol	Watson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	Munro, Julia	Wilkinson, John
Duncan, Dwight	Murdoch, Bill	Wilson, Jim
Dunlop, Garfield	O'Toole, John	Witmer, Elizabeth
Elliott, Christine	Oraziotti, David	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Ferreira, Paul	Ouellette, Jerry J.	Yakabuski, John
Gerretsen, John	Parsons, Ernie	Zimmer, David
Gravelle, Michael	Patten, Richard	

**The Speaker:** Those opposed?

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 89; the nays are 0.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. The member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** We're wasting time. I can wait. Order. It's now time for oral questions.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

## MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier. At 10 after 1 this afternoon, a story appeared on the CP wire reporting that the Ford Motor Co. had closed its casting plant in Windsor today. Of course, that was announced some time ago, but 450 people in Windsor will not be going to work tomorrow morning.

Since the start of 2005, Ontario has lost 137,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs. Meanwhile, the Premier has remained idle on the sidelines.

Over a year ago, in December 2005, the Ontario Legislature called for the Premier to bring forward a comprehensive jobs plan. That call for a comprehensive jobs plan was supported by all parties. In fact, the expression in the resolution, which was voted on by Liberal MPPs as well as others, was very clear: It said, "a comprehensive action plan."

We've seen no leadership from the Premier whatsoever on this. My question is this: Why have we not seen the comprehensive jobs plan that Liberal MPPs and all others in this House voted for? Where is it?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm not sure that any government has done more for the auto sector in North America in the last four or five years than we have.

The Conservative Party opposed our half-billion-dollar plan. They said that it was inappropriate for us to partner with the private sector. They effectively said that we should allow the forces of creative destruction to kind of play themselves out. We decided on a different approach. We invested half a billion dollars, and with that we leveraged \$7 billion worth of new investment in the auto sector. That has been successful, so much so that for the first time since the invention of the car, we are the number one auto producer in North America, and we've earned that distinction three years in a row now.

**Mr. Tory:** Perhaps the Premier would like to produce in the House the quote in which I've said, at any time, anything in opposition to the auto investment fund. Perhaps you could bring that here and share that with us. Maybe the Premier—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. I need to be able to hear the Leader of the Opposition place his question.

Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** I'm sure he has that quote handy and he could tell us when it was said.

Since the beginning of 2005, Ontario has lost 161 well-paying manufacturing jobs each and every day. Some of the Premier's own MPPs—the member for Brant, for instance—have called the recent job losses in his riding, at Blue Bird Corp. when it closes its doors, "tragic." The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration

has referred to the "economic devastation" in Cornwall. The Premier, meanwhile, has responded by calling these job losses "a little bit of contraction," and shrugging it off as a fact of life. We have not seen any leadership.

The member for Brant went on, correctly, to say that there are things the government can do to help plants stay open. He is right.

The question is, on the border, on taxes, on regulations, on a whole host of these fronts, when will we see a comprehensive jobs plan from the McGuinty government, as was voted on by this Legislature well over a year ago? When will we see it?

1450

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** We chose to stand up for the auto industry. The party opposite chose not to. They voted against our budget, which provided for a half-billion-dollar support package. But more than that, we also have in place over a billion dollars in support for the forestry industry, which is being challenged not just here in Ontario but indeed throughout North America. We have close to a billion dollars in support for the agriculture sector. We have another half-billion-dollar plan in place to support advanced manufacturing to help that sector transition itself to a point where it's more competitive, more productive and more value-added by way of products. We are going to continue to provide supports to those sectors which come under challenge as the result of finding themselves, through no fault of their own, in an era of globalization. We know where we're going to get the kind of money we need to provide those supports on an ongoing basis. Mr. Tory is telling us that he's going to take \$2.5 billion out of health care, and on top of that, he's going to invest more in health care, and apparently he's going to put more into supports for manufacturing—

**The Speaker:** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** The people will have their judgment from the man who said he was not going to raise taxes and brought in the biggest tax increase in the history of the province of Ontario. A lot of the people who have lost their jobs and a lot of people who are still working are finding it very hard indeed to make ends meet, with this man over there spending the money. We talked about a billion-dollar financial aid package for the forestry industry, one of the biggest flim-flam acts in the history of Ontario. Almost no one has taken it up because, when you talk to people over there, they don't need loan guarantees; they need real help. Of all the jobs that have been lost—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour):** They're certainly not afraid of you, Lisa.

**The Speaker:** Minister of Labour, that's not helpful. The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** Thirteen thousand jobs were lost in April alone, and even when there's good news, like the Victor diamond mine, the Premier can't help but try and do that in by tripling the tax rate on diamonds. This is what they

described as something they would normally experience in a Third World country. People look at this astonishing about-face and they rethink their own investments in Ontario, and that costs us jobs. The Premier's credibility is on the line here.

When will he decide to finally show some leadership and bring in a comprehensive jobs plan so we don't repeat the 13,000 jobs we lost in the month of April alone? When are we going to see the plan?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** We've just had a little bit more insight into the thinking, or lack thereof, with respect to economic strategy. So the leader of the official opposition tells us that even though we're putting half a billion dollars into auto, that's not enough. He says that even though we're putting \$1 billion into forestry, that is not enough. He's telling us that even though we're putting \$1 billion to support agriculture, that's not enough. He says that even though we're putting \$500 million into supporting advanced manufacturing, that is not enough. He doesn't tell us where he's going to get the money to put more in there, but at the same time he stands up and says that, no, he's not prepared to support our plan to ensure that we receive reasonable revenues for mining of diamonds in the province of Ontario. So he's going to have to come clean and tell us how he's going to invest more than the \$2 billion we have in place to support manufacturing in Ontario, and at the same time take \$2.5 billion out of health care, and at the same time reduce our tax on diamond mining in Ontario.

**The Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Tory:** My question is for the Premier. Let me say this to the Premier: You—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** As soon as I sit down, the place just loses it. We don't need to do this. I need to be able to hear members both place their questions and respond to them.

The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** Mr. Speaker, let me say this to the Premier. You don't look investors—people who are going to invest \$1 billion in this province—in the eye and extol the virtues of our low tax rates and then turn around, months later, and triple that tax. You don't do it. It sends the wrong signals. They were the ones who said they felt like they were in a Third World country, not me.

Despite the investments that the Premier talks about in the auto sector, we've still lost 17,000 jobs in assembly and parts over the last two years. The C.D. Howe Institute says the government has shown "little interest in improving business tax competitiveness." They say that we're "exceptional—in a bad sense ... with the most burdensome taxes in the country." The Premier tries to blame the global economy, but Richard Paton of the Canadian Chemical Producers' Association says, "governments are part of the problem." and "[R]unning after company executives after a plant-closing announcement is not the way to create industrial policy." That is why the Legislature said that we should have a comprehensive jobs plan. Your own MPPs voted for it.



I ask the Premier this: Why have we not seen the comprehensive jobs plan your own MPPs voted for?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** There is lots of good news in Ontario when it comes to economic growth. I know that the leader of the official opposition will, at some point, want to stand up and acknowledge that there are 320,000 net new jobs that have been created on our watch. That's entirely due to the entrepreneurialism, dedication, commitment, hard work and innovative capacity of the people of Ontario.

We have received, so far, 58 applications under our forestry sector package—58 applications which, if granted, would result in \$1.2 billion of private sector investment in the province of Ontario. That would be on top of the \$7 billion worth of new investment in our auto sector. So I'm just not as bleak, I'm just not as gloomy and I'm just not as pessimistic as the leader of the official opposition. In fact, I have every faith and confidence in this economy because I have every faith and confidence in the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Tory:** The problem when the Premier uses the numbers the way he does is that if you had talked not about the 320,000 net new jobs but added to that 135,000 jobs that were lost—if we still had those jobs, you'd be able to talk about 455,000 jobs to the better and you'd be able to talk about 135,000 families who would be working today, who are not working. We would be 135,000 jobs to the better—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Let's all just take a very deep breath. Remember why we're here. We need to show some respect for the place we're in and for other members and our traditions. Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** The fact is, the reason the Premier uses the net number is because there are 135,000 families minus their paycheques, minus their jobs today, who would be working. And so the situation is very simple: We have a government that has brought forward no plan when they voted for one. They've punitively increased taxes on a diamond industry investment, for example, that has created new jobs, something that the investor said they'd expect from a Third World government.

What we need is leadership. We need a comprehensive plan. The Premier has failed to provide this in four years in office. He has failed to deliver real economic leadership. He has failed to deliver certainty and reliability to investors. When are we going to see a comprehensive jobs plan for the province of Ontario and some certainty and reliability from the Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I kind of visualize this dark cloud over the leader of the official opposition. He's subject to a constant downpour.

In addition to putting in place those billions of dollars worth of supports that are helping manufacturing, in particular, transition itself to a point where it's stronger, we've also done something else which is really important in the knowledge economy and in an era of globalization. This too was not supported by the official opposition. We've made a \$6.2-billion investment in post-secondary

education. People around the world will tell you that if you truly want to be competitive, if you truly want to have in place an intelligent economic strategy, you have to develop your human capital; you have to invest in young people in particular. That's what we've done. I'm proud to report that there are 86,000 more young people in our colleges and universities today than there were just three and a half years ago.

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**Mr. Tory:** If there are dark clouds anywhere, it is over the houses and the lives of 135,000 people who have lost their jobs on your watch, with no plan to make up for that. The Premier, I would suggest respectfully, is badly out of touch. He talks about exuberance in a part of the province where 7,000 jobs have been lost. He refers to "some challenges" facing manufacturing, when over 135,000 jobs have been lost.

The Premier triples taxes on our first-ever diamond mine and then wonders why investors say it might be our last. Mr. Paton says the parties—and he's referring to the political parties—should be working together to develop economic plans. The Legislature showed its ability to work together by voting 44 to 0 in favour of your government's bringing forward a comprehensive action plan on jobs. The Premier has rejected that and lives in an economic bubble of delusion. I only ask, why won't the Premier respect the wishes of the Legislature and bring forward a comprehensive job plan? When will we see it?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The leader of the official opposition would have us believe that he brings some certain expertise when it comes to developing plans. I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, but more importantly the people of Ontario, to take even a cursory look at the recent health care plan put forward by my honourable colleague opposite. He tells us that he's going to invest ever more money in health care, while at the same time taking \$2.5 billion out of health care. I think Houdini is alive and well and found in the person of the leader of the official opposition. There are many more tricks to come. We'll stay focused on the priorities of the people of Ontario.

**The Speaker:** Order. New question.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. Thousands of manufacturing and forest sector jobs have been lost across Ontario, and yet you're quoted as saying, "I don't believe we should stand in the way of the inevitable." Premier, in Windsor, Hamilton, Kitchener, Mississauga, Oshawa, Thunder Bay and other communities, literally thousands of Ontario working families have protested and demonstrated to call your attention to the loss of manufacturing jobs. Whether it's at a manufacturing plant in Mississauga or people stopping traffic on Highway 11 between Hearst and Kapuskasing, they want to see some action from the McGuinty government. Tomorrow, thousands of workers will demonstrate in Ottawa.

My question is this: Does the Premier still believe the destruction of manufacturing jobs is inevitable? If not, where is the McGuinty government's plan to sustain and save manufacturing jobs in Ontario?



**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I know there was a demonstration held just this past weekend, I believe, and the Minister of Economic Development and Trade and the Minister of Energy were invited to participate in that demonstration. In fact, they were invited to stand at the front of this parade, which shows you the relationship we have with working people in the province of Ontario.

What they've urged us to do, and what I would urge my colleagues opposite to do, is in particular when it comes to forestry. We know how hard municipalities are working to attack that challenge. We know how much difficulty families have, grappling with the anxiety, pain and suffering associated with job loss. We know that we brought \$1 billion to the table, but we still don't know when, and if, the federal government is going to come to the table and participate in a comprehensive national plan to lend more support to Canada's forestry sector.

**Mr. Hampton:** The Premier can try to find someone else to blame. The fact of the matter is that 52,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost in Ontario in the last year; 175,000 manufacturing jobs have disappeared under the McGuinty government since August of 2004. That's over 15% of Ontario's manufacturing jobs, and they're not just numbers. These are workers and families that have lost their paycheque, their pension and their livelihood.

Premier, how many more manufacturing jobs have to be destroyed in Ontario before you stop looking for someone else to blame and you come up with an effective strategy to sustain and save manufacturing jobs in this province?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Only the NDP could argue that \$3 billion represents nothing by way of commitment on the part of this government when it comes to supporting the manufacturing sector.

I know that among the other pieces of good news, the leader of the NDP is going to want to acknowledge our government's support by way of a grant of \$22.5 million to Abitibi Consolidated for the installation of an \$84-million biomass boiler at its Fort Frances complex. That may be easily dismissed by the leader of the NDP, but I know that the people of Fort Frances and I know that those families who are dependent for their livelihood on their employment at the Abitibi Consolidated plant there are very pleased that we have come to the table, that we're providing support by way of real dollars. We have every confidence that that plant is going to continue to grow and do well.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, the workers there want to know, when there's a 500-megawatt surplus of electricity in northwestern Ontario and when it's the lowest-cost generated electricity in the world, why they should be worrying. The reason they're worrying is because of the McGuinty government's wrong-headed policy of driving industrial hydro rates through the roof.

But that still misses the point, Premier. Today, Windsor is laying off—last day at the Ford Windsor casting plant—500 workers. Today, American Standard announced they're shutting down in Cambridge—another 60 workers. Yesterday, Kenora Forest Products an-

nounced they're shutting down for a month—another 100 workers.

I just ask the Premier again: If you don't have a plan to sustain and save manufacturing and forest sector jobs in Ontario, will you at least pass my jobs commissioner's bill so we will have an independent, credible body dedicated to sustaining jobs—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** It turns out there's a hidden agenda here.

You know, we have, in fairness to the leader of the NDP, taken a good look at the notion of a jobs commissioner. But I just don't think it lends any comfort, any substantive support, to families who are up against it at a time of real challenge for the manufacturing sector. We think that, instead, what we need to do is to continue to put in place the kinds of plans, the kinds of strategies and the kinds of serious dollars—I'm talking \$3 billion so far to support auto and manufacturing and agriculture. We think those are the kinds of things that are of real value, of real significance and of real substance when it comes to those families.

We will continue to work with our communities. We will continue to work with industries of whatever nature in the manufacturing sector, and any others as well that might be challenged. We will continue to do the kinds of things that they tell us are meaningful to them, including the kinds of programs that we have already put in place.

#### CHILD CARE

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** To the Premier: You talk about action. What we see is tens of thousands of jobs being lost virtually every month, and that's not action.

But yesterday, the Minister of Children and Youth Services was asked why the McGuinty government was trying to hide child care centre health and safety information from parents for two years. She held up this flimsy brochure and said it provided all the information parents needed. A few hours later, the minister admitted that child care health and safety information should be made available on a government website. But there's a catch: The website might not be up and running for four, five or six months. The Information and Privacy Commissioner said that parents should have this information now.

My question is this: Will the Premier ensure that this health and safety information on licensed child care centres is made available now, today, when parents need it, not five or six months from now?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm going to refer this to the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

1510

**Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services):** Yesterday, I actually said that the website will be up in a few months, and it's been a reported commitment that it be up by the fall. The



important thing is for us to get this right. My ministry knows that this is a very high priority for me, and if they can do it sooner than that, they will. But the important thing is that this site work properly so that parents can access the kind of information they require. This is not about doing a quick and dirty. This is about doing a comprehensive, helpful site of information. It will be filled with all sorts of information that parents can access and that we can keep up to date. Parents are very interested in this kind of solution.

**Mr. Hampton:** The question still hasn't been answered. Why did the McGuinty government try to hide this information for two years, and why now do we see a website, but it won't be up and running for months? The Information and Privacy Commissioner said today that the McGuinty government is not living up to the Premier's promise "to provide more open and transparent government."

But the information is just part of it. The other part is enforcement and follow-up. It takes this ministry months to follow up on issues of health and safety at child care centres. In Quebec, serious issues are followed up on in 24 hours.

Premier, four years ago, you promised \$300 million of new provincial funding for child care. My question is this: Where is the new \$300 million of provincial money for child care? Child care centres haven't seen it yet.

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** There are a few different parts to the leader of the third party's question. I would first like to address the matter of FOI requests. I'm really very pleased that the Information and Privacy Commissioner has rated my ministry's compliance at 95.5%. This is for 2006, and this result is up from 84.3% in 2005. We're going to work really hard to maintain this level and in fact improve upon it wherever possible. So this is proof from an independent officer of this Legislature that my ministry has never attempted to hide any information.

**Mr. Hampton:** The Toronto Star will be happy to know that apparently their exercise of having to battle with your ministry for two years was unnecessary. They'll be very happy to know that. But they also know that that is just not the case.

Now, under the McGuinty government, there is such a shortage of licensed, regulated child care spaces that parents of young children are forced to take whatever they can get. Nine out of 10 families looking for child care spaces can't find licensed, regulated child care, and those who do often can't afford the child care fees of \$1,000 a month or more. It's not just the \$300 million of new provincial funding that was promised by the Premier that is missing. The McGuinty government has received \$160 million of federal money for child care.

My question: Why hasn't the McGuinty government invested that \$160 million of federal money in licensed, regulated, non-profit child care?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** I would also like to take this opportunity to remind the member that it was our government that created almost 15,000 new child care spaces last year, and in last year's budget we committed to sustain every single one of those new spaces.

I'm looking forward to disbursing a second batch of funding. For this fiscal year, already we have dispatched \$25 million in new funding, as announced in our budget, and we're looking forward to allocating and informing municipalities as to how they will receive \$97 million more very shortly.

I think it's also important for us to remember that it was the NDP government that actually cut child care spaces in this province.

## MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** My question is to the Premier. Since January 2005, 137,000 Ontarians have lost their jobs in the manufacturing sector. This trend continued in April, as another 13,000 Ontarians lost their manufacturing jobs. The Premier has shown no leadership on this file. All we have seen from the Premier's office is dithering, deflecting and delaying. High levels of taxation, high levels of input costs and high levels of regulation are damaging Ontario's attractiveness to employers.

In December 2005, the Legislature voted unanimously for the government to come up with a comprehensive jobs plan. We continue to wait for the plan. Premier, when are you going to realize that the manufacturing sector in this province is in peril and bring forward that comprehensive job plan?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues):** I'm very pleased to respond. There are many areas of Ontario that do have manufacturing at their very core. We know there are challenges there, and that's why we have partnered with all of those communities. We have, for these last three and a half years, come forward with very particular programs to partner with business, to bring investment and growth to that very manufacturing sector.

It is very important to note that the opposition parties did not support any of these initiatives. And so I need to ask you, as you lay out what your platform might be, which of these items would you not have invested in: The automotive investment strategy of \$500 million or the advanced manufacturing program, another \$500 million? What about the apprenticeship tax credit, which we've just extended to 2012? Which of those things would you not support? In fact, you voted against every single initiative that has partnered with the manufacturing sector.

We know there are challenges, but in the words of Buzz Hargrove, Dalton McGuinty's government is the largest supporter, the greatest supporter of this sector in all of the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary?



**Mr. Chudleigh:** The empathy of the minister for the unemployed is duly noted.

The minister can try to pull the wool over the eyes of Ontarians all she likes, but even in the region represented by two of the top cabinet ministers, Liberal government policies are proving harmful. The fact of the matter is that Windsor has the highest level of unemployment in Ontario and needs help now. It's already too late for the workers at the Ford casting plant, 450 workers; the Ford Essex engine plant, 650 workers; Data Corp., 23 workers; Bernard Mould, 49 workers; Brahm Industries, 185 workers—all in Windsor.

We are still waiting for a comprehensive jobs plan. Ontarians are still waiting; people in Windsor are still waiting. When is the Liberal government going to produce the jobs plan this Legislature demanded unanimously back in December 2005?

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** I guess my question for the member opposite is, where were you when we tabled our budget to promote those very same companies? Where were you? Where were you this month when we were in Windsor opening the retraining centre for those very Ford workers that you speak about? Where were you on Sunday? Were you in Oshawa with the workers there? Were you in Windsor with the workers in Windsor? That's where we were this past Sunday. That's where we were in Kitchener–Waterloo. That's where we were in St. Thomas. We are walking with the workers, and you should remember those words.

I will tell you this: When you want to go to your workers, when you go to your community, I will stand side by side with the workers every time. They know that we're partnering with them to move them forward.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. New question?

1520

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question, the member for Toronto Danforth.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** It's always a pleasure to be greeted warmly by my friends in the chamber.

My question is for the Premier. For over 20 years, California has had community right-to-know laws that require companies to disclose to consumers carcinogens that are present in their product lines. If Bill 164 passes, Ontario will become the first jurisdiction in Canada to follow California's lead. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is a staunch proponent of community right to know. If Republican Governor Schwarzenegger believes people have a right to know what toxic products are in their daily purchases, does the Premier? If so, when will the McGuinty government call Bill 164 for third reading?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** This bill, the public should be aware, is a private member's bill and has been to committee. There

was a very good debate at the committee, which we all followed very closely.

I think the advice is that there is clearly a need for this information to be available. The issue at the committee, I think, was which level of government is best suited to provide it in the best possible way. I think there was a legitimate debate around whether one standard across the country is better—is that the most effective way to handle it?—or should each individual province have a different approach? I would say to the member that there was a legitimate debate on that at committee.

I, on behalf of the government, asked the federal government to update us on where they stand on their plans for this. It isn't a question of whether or not the information is available; it's whether it is best handled with one national standard or with each of the provinces, the territories and the federal government having—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Tabuns:** Interesting. Leading environmental groups and health advocates like the Ontario College of Family Physicians and the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario support passage of this bill. In fact, the minister's own colleagues voted for it in committee. Passing Bill 164 is in keeping with a recommendation, which some 200 of the world's leading scientists just made, that governments need to invoke precautionary measures to reduce the exposure of expectant mothers and infants to toxins.

The Premier found time to give himself a \$40,000 pay raise. In this case, the minister and the government are going to pass the buck to a federal government that they denounce on a regular basis. So again, the question I have for this government is, will this government bring forward Bill 164 for third reading or are they going to tell the Terminator that we terminated the right of access to information in this province?

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** The Minister of the Environment wants to comment on this.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I know my friend opposite understands the importance not only of his private member's bill with respect to notification but, more importantly, pollution reduction.

Let me tell you about the efforts we, as a government, have made to continue to update our standards so that we reduce the amount of pollution in our atmosphere. We have provided new and updated standards for 40 air pollutants, the biggest move on this file in 25 years. Our regulation 127 has incredibly strict standards with respect to the type of notification.

That being said, I'm happy to provide my friend opposite with a copy of a letter that Minister Phillips and I wrote to Ministers Baird and Clement. It talks about the fact that stakeholders at the very public hearings on his bill are very concerned about duplication of efforts. They want national standards. We're encouraging the government of Canada to move quickly with those national standards, and we will support their initiatives in that regard, if and when they do that.



## NURSES

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. During my time in office, one of the strongest advocates for our health care system has been nurses. In fact, the excellence of nursing care was demonstrated in Brampton on April 11 during the recent school bus tragedy on Highway 410.

In the past, nurses' contribution to our health care system was minimized, and we all suffered the consequences of that grievous mistake. I'm proud to report to the House that William Osler hospital has recently hired 78 more full-time nurses and 15 new grads to provide health care to my constituents. But there's more work to do.

Minister, the nursing profession is finally starting to recover from cuts in the 1990s, but thousands of nurses are set to retire in the coming years. How do you plan on meeting this looming crisis?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I want to thank the honourable member and thank her especially for raising the cuts in the 1990s. These remain a very, very strong memory for nurses. Linda Haslam-Stroud, the president of the Ontario Nurses' Association, said in a letter to the National Post, "The current nursing shortage in Ontario lies with the previous provincial Conservative government's planning efforts, which resulted in thousands of nurses being laid off." She also questions the leader of the official opposition's promise to "respect" nurses by linking it to Mike Harris's comparison of nurses to hula hoops.

Our record on these matters with respect to nursing is clear. We fulfilled our commitment of 8,000 new nursing positions. Those are being fully funded and evolved in health care in Ontario, including, as an example, the 78 new full-time positions mentioned at the William Osler Health Centre—10% more nurses working full-time—and new initiatives at the nursing level to take the experience of our experienced nurses and put it to work in training the new ones, alongside efforts through 19,000 bed lifts to literally take the pressure off the backs of our nurses to sustain them longer in those important roles.

**Mrs. Jeffrey:** Minister, we've been in government for almost four years now, and you've just mentioned some of the key initiatives to keep nurses on the job longer. But I'm worried about the future and the huge demands that an aging baby boomer population will put on our health care system. We respect nurses, and we need to make nursing an attractive profession for the next generation. Otherwise, there won't be enough nurses to help us through what are frightening times, when we need both physical and emotional support. Minister, what initiatives are being put in place so that our young people consider the profession of nursing in the future?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** One of the things I have had the privilege to do is bring a much more strategic

capacity to the Ministry of Health through the addition of an assistant deputy minister of health human resources, who also reports to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. One of the initiatives we've launched—really the only jurisdiction in the world—is with our new nursing grad guarantee. This is designed to make sure that our new nurses are quickly transitioned to full-time employment. It helps to keep them in Ontario. Unlike the official opposition's health care agenda—that is, to spend money on private delivery—ours is to invest in our public health entities. From them, it's the same story, just from a different Tory in this case. The official opposition has demonstrated very, very clearly over the course of the last week that despite years on the job, the leader of the official opposition has no new ideas and instead used language in his document last week that resorts very much to that used during the Common Sense Revolution. The reality in Ontario is that the knowledge base of nurses, who work in an evidence-based world—they remember very, very well the cuts perpetuated by the previous government.

## MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie—Lincoln):** I have a question for the Minister of Economic Development. Sadly, Niagara and Hamilton have become poster children for the massive manufacturing job losses in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. Working families in Fort Erie, Niagara Falls and throughout the Niagara Peninsula are concerned about the growing list of manufacturing job losses in the region: Redpath Sugar, 20 jobs; Port Weller Dry Docks, 250 jobs gone; Dana auto parts, 537 jobs gone; GDX Automotive in Welland, 200 jobs gone. The minister says she's standing with those workers. She's spending a lot of time standing in unemployment lines in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario.

Minister, this House passed a resolution to call on you to bring forward a plan; a committee of your own members have called for that as well. Why do you dismiss that call of members of the assembly?

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues):** I very much appreciate the opportunity to talk about what we are doing for our manufacturing sector. We have a delegation from California visiting us today, and they're facing the same challenges in manufacturing. We know that there are world issues, but the difference in Ontario is that we have taken steps to actually partner with our companies in Ontario. We partnered with the Big Five automotive companies, a move that you actually opposed. So all of those steel companies that supply the steel for those cars, you opposed that move. As well, the advanced manufacturing strategy that has brought jobs and secured jobs to several plants around Ontario: This same member asking these questions opposed that move, even though what we need to do is break open new markets for the very same manufacturers that he—



**The Speaker:** Thank you. Supplementary?

1530

**Mr. Hudak:** I'll tell you what we opposed. When Dalton McGuinty brought in the biggest tax hike in the history of the province, we opposed that. When Dalton McGuinty brought in policies to take electricity rates through the roof, we opposed those. When Dalton McGuinty brought in runaway spending in budget after budget, fuelled by higher taxes, we opposed that. You see the result: 140,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs gone in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. People in Flamborough, people in Brantford and people in Stoney Creek want to know what you're going to do about Slater Steel losing 360 jobs; Stelco, 800 jobs; Hamilton Specialty Bar, 360 jobs; Rheem Canada, 150 jobs, to name just some.

Minister, say to the fellow next to you, the Premier, who has ducked out on facing these issues, to get rid of that "Don't Worry, Be Happy" Bobby McFerrin tune, show some understanding for what these families are going through, and do something about the plight of manufacturing jobs.

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** This is so surprising. This is the same opposition member who was at the cabinet table when the lights went out on all the manufacturers in this province. The largest blackout in our history was under that very same government, and now he purports to ask us what we're doing. Why would this same member vote against the decrease in taxes to business tabled in the very last budget—not three years ago; the very last budget? You voted against those tax decreases to the same businesses you purport to care for. Are you going to stand and tell me that you oppose those Niagara companies, which are now bidding on and winning contracts in Alberta, seeking new opportunities? Is this the same member who opposes the Ontario suppliers that have now entered the Home Depot supply chain because of our activity with Home Depot? This is the kind of business activity that companies in Ontario need from their government—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches—East York):** In the absence of the Premier, my question is to the Minister of the Environment. Last Friday, Windsor mayor Eddie Francis was forced to declare a state of emergency when the Ministry of the Environment failed to respond to a toxic blaze that burned for three hours. The blaze on Friday is just another example of how the Ministry of the Environment is unable to protect the health and safety of residents when a toxic crisis hits because of staffing cuts.

Madam Minister, I have to ask you: Have you not got the Premier's ear? Why won't the Premier give the Minister of the Environment the funds to re-establish the capacity of the Ministry of the Environment in Windsor so that the mayor doesn't have to scramble to gather the critical environmental information he needs to protect his local residents and the firefighters who work for him?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** Let me assure my friend opposite that upon learning about the fire, ministry staff did promptly respond and attend at the fire scene to assess potential environmental concerns and determine appropriate next steps. Immediately, they responded and attended at the scene. The Windsor area office supervisor and the senior environmental officer were on the scene immediately, coordinating and working with fire officials. They discussed the situation with the fire chief and collectively agreed, based on the fact that the fire was nearly fully extinguished and the estimated response time of the ministry's specialized monitoring personnel—not those who were already on the scene and working closely with the fire chief—would take some time, that it would not be initiated. The fire department conducted air tests that indicated that the air quality in the community had essentially returned to normal. My ministry respected the decision of the local fire chief in that regard.

**Mr. Prue:** Notwithstanding the minister's answer, the reality is that there were not sufficient and adequate staff present at the time they were needed because of the staffing cuts and because you have not reinstated what the previous government did. The lack of the Ministry of the Environment's capacity is only one way the health and safety of Ontarians is being compromised by toxins in our air, water and soil. Ontarians like the ones who live and work in the 600 properties affected by the toxic smoke from the blaze in Windsor currently don't have the right to know what chemicals in their neighbourhoods are posing a risk to their health. We in the NDP have proposed the Community Right to Know Act, which will give Ontarians that long-overdue right. Minister, when will you advocate to your government to help Ontarians protect themselves from toxic threats and pass Bill 164?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** Let me go back to the circumstance in Windsor because I want to speak loudly and clearly and assure the community in Windsor that the Ministry of the Environment was on the scene immediately working with those experts on that scene to ensure that that community was safe and that the health and well-being of the community of Windsor was first and foremost in our minds. If there are things that we can do to work with the community of Windsor, as we have done with other communities across the province, to ensure that we can do better—we can always do better. We can always do more. We are open to talking with the mayor. Already my colleagues from Windsor have raised with me whether or not there are opportunities for us to continue to expand our ability to respond.

But first and foremost, let me assure the community of Windsor that my primary responsibility and the ministry's primary responsibility is to ensure they are safe and their health and well-being are protected, and that's exactly what we did.

#### COMMUNITIES IN ACTION FUND

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph—Wellington):** My question is for the Minister of Health Promotion. Recently, I



had the opportunity to announce \$14,000 for Onward Willow Better Beginnings, Better Futures to fund its active outdoor program in my riding. This funding came thanks to your ministry's great program, the communities in action fund. I can't tell you how happy this group was to receive funding and recognition for their great work, certainly not like the negative reaction we heard from the member from Lanark-Carleton a while ago.

Onward Willow used a previous CIAF grant to fund an after-school recreation and homework program. This new CIAF grant will be used to start a summer activity program. CIAF grants are ensuring that kids whose parents may not be able to afford organized sports leagues can be physically active. The CIAF program is a great way for groups in my riding to help the community of Guelph get active.

I understand that on top of the \$5 million in CIAF grants recently announced, there is an additional \$2.5 million in funding for the program, thanks to the government's 2007 budget. Would the minister tell this House how groups in my riding can apply for this extra money?

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I want to thank the honourable member for the good work she does to promote the communities in action fund. She's quite correct: Minister Sorbara in his budget a few months ago added \$2.5 million. But a number of the stakeholders who have benefited from this program are very concerned about the Tory party plan to slash funding in health care under the guise of efficiency. Well, the last time we heard about Tory efficiency in health care, the government closed 28 hospitals; they fired 8,000 nurses. In my hometown of Ottawa, we saw that so-called Tory efficiency agenda at work. They closed the Grace hospital. They closed the Riverside. They tried to close the CHEO cardiac unit and they tried to close the Montfort Hospital.

The Tory party can't have it both ways. What do they consider inefficiencies within the health care system? Is it programs like the communities in action fund? As the Toronto Star said the other day, John Tory wants to have his tax cuts and spend them too.

We stand by the people who promote fitness and physical activity in this province—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Mrs. Sandals:** I'm very pleased that we are being able to extend the program, but I am worried about the cuts you're speaking about, Minister. I, however, look forward to helping my constituents apply for the second round of CIAF grants. I'm proud of the investment our government is making in the health and well-being of Ontarians. I know that in my riding we've received over \$160,000 worth of CIAF grants—gone to groups like the Belwood Lodge and Camp, the city of Guelph, and the YM/YWCA of Guelph, all of which have created great new programs to keep our community active. This shows our government's commitment to helping constituents stay healthy and active. But I also know that my constitu-

ents want more nurses and better health care. They want their government to provide the opportunity that helps them stay in shape. Recently, the members of the opposition have been suggesting a cut of \$2.5 billion to health care in Ontario. I know your ministry has provided us with over \$20 million in CIAF grants. What could these cuts that they're proposing mean to the CIAF grants?

1540

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** I just don't know what the Leader of the Opposition categorizes as inefficiencies within the health care system. I don't know if the communities in action fund, which is very well received by community groups across the province—I don't think they'd consider it an inefficient program. I do know that, for instance, the Conservative Party is very unclear with respect to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Exactly one half of their caucus either voted against it or were not there for the vote in the first place.

The Progressive Conservative Party is quickly becoming the great oxymoron of our time, a bit like jumbo shrimp. You're either progressive or you're conservative. They're not very progressive when they go down the route of trying to shut down hospitals, fire nurses and put the boots to the sports and recreation community in the province, which has benefited so much from the communities in action fund.

In a rebuttal to the Premier last week, the Leader of the Opposition referred to the scandal-plagued former PC government when he said, "We know what happened to the previous government." Well, if he knows what happened—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

## MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Over 137,000 manufacturing job losses have happened under your watch. Some of those losses in Peterborough include the closure of MasterBrand Cabinets, National Grocers service and Transcontinental Best Book printing. The Premier has referred to these job losses as "hiccups" and "contractions," and another of your colleagues had the gall to refer to small communities affected by hard-hitting job losses as "crying babies."

Minister, when will you show respect for this Legislature and the members? When can communities like Peterborough expect to see the comprehensive job plan that members from all parties supported in this Legislature over 16 months ago?

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues):** I appreciate the interest that this particular member is showing in those manufacturing losses. We understand the challenges that this sector is facing. In fact, this member knows—who has called my office to see all that we have done in interacting with

companies the moment we understand that there may be an issue. This member also knows full well that we are bringing a full-court press: If there is an opportunity to work with the company, we introduce them to our programming; we ask them if there is anything that we can do to help their workforce; if there is a shutdown, we introduce them immediately to our Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, which, on a regular basis, is on the site in that town literally the very next day. In many instances, and this member will know full well, we have gone wherever that corporate headquarters has been to sit down and talk about what opportunities we have for our Ontario workers.

This member also needs to recognize that when it comes to supporting budgets—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Ms. Scott:** Across Ontario we still see thousands of manufacturing jobs lost monthly. But don't take it from me. How about the Peterborough Examiner? Titles like, "Jobs are Melting Away" and "Area Communities Face Uncertain Future." The Canadian Federation of Independent Business says, "The McGuinty Liberals have greatly increased the regulation and red tape faced by small businesses."

When referring to the exorbitant job losses in small communities, an article in the Peterborough Examiner states, "Stick a pin in a map of Ontario and you'll find a similar story just about everywhere."

Minister, you've broken countless promises. You've acted contrary to your own commitment by not honouring the resolution supported by members from all parties. My question to the minister is: Do you have any intention of honouring the job loss strategy plan? Do you still feel that over 137,000 job losses is a contraction? Do you still feel that our small communities that are suffering these job manufacturing losses are nothing more than crying babies? Do you still feel that way?

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** I need to understand how it is, based on this question, that this same member voted against the education property tax decrease by 40% in the very last budget. Is it this same member who voted against the last budget that we tabled for a writeoff on capital investments in two years? Is it this same member who voted against the automotive investment strategy, and in her very own riding there are companies that are part of the supply chain of our assemblers? Is it this same member who voted against the advanced automotive manufacturing strategy? Please tell me that you are not the same person who has voted against every single initiative. And you have the gall to pretend to care—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

#### ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the minister responsible for native affairs. Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation has a \$650,000 legal bill because it was forced to go to court to

defend its constitutional and legal rights against a \$10-billion lawsuit by a mining exploration company. The First Nation was forced to go to court to defend its rights because the McGuinty government failed to fulfill its constitutional obligations to consult with the First Nation before handing out mineral exploration permits to the mining company. Since it was the failure of the McGuinty government to fulfill its constitutional obligations and consult with the First Nation about its rights and interests that forced the First Nation to go to court, will the McGuinty government do the right thing and pay the \$650,000 legal bill, which rightfully belongs to the McGuinty government?

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** Let's give him the direct answer right off the bat—the answer is no—and then let's talk about consultation and the attempt of the McGuinty government to engage First Nations of this province in a consultation exercise that we launched over a year ago.

We are working with the Chiefs of Ontario and other native organizations right across the province to get that engagement so that we can have a clear understanding of what our obligation is and what, in a sort of class sense, we'll be required to do in regard to consultation for each sort of government activity. I have worked with all my fellow ministers and have had them look at their ministries and at what their obligation is for all the activities they engage in, and we're actively pursuing that discussion with aboriginal people right across this province so that we'll have a clear-cut set of the consultation guidelines over the next year.

**Mr. Hampton:** Minister, you might want to read what the judge said about the McGuinty government when he handed down his judgment: "Despite repeated judicial messages delivered over the course of 16 years, the evidentiary record available in this case sadly reveals that the provincial crown—the McGuinty government—"has not heard or comprehended this message and has failed in fulfilling this obligation."

"The Ontario government was not present ... and the evidentiary record indicates that it has been almost entirely absent from the consultation process" with Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug.

"The crown (Ontario) ... [has] chosen to ignore ... the concerns and ignore the perspective of the First Nations band in question."

It's very clear, when you read the judge's decision, that the First Nation was forced to go to court to defend its rights because the McGuinty government failed.

This is a poor community. The unemployment rate is 85%. Don't you think it's fair that you finally meet your obligation and pay the legal bill instead of foisting it off on a poor—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked.

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** Speaker, I refer the question to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.



**Hon. Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** I wish the leader of the third party would quote from the May 22 decision. However, let me tell you that Ontario has consistently presented solutions that are fair and reasonable as a way to keep all parties in this case moving forward to a resolution. Justice Smith has now adopted some of these provisions and timelines in his latest decision.

Our immediate priority isn't about division, the way the third party's is. Ours is to meet the timelines for information disclosure and to ensure that both parties move on in a collaborative, constructive manner.

1550

## PETITIONS

### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I have petitions here signed by Dr. Andrew Caruk from Kitchener and more than 1,250 others that read as follows:

"Petition to the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I'm pleased to affix my signature as the proud proponent of this bill.

### SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDING

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. I would like to thank some of the staff at Catholic Family Services of Peel for having sent it to me. It's entitled "Fairness for Families in the 905 Belt" and it reads as follows:

"Whereas the population of the greater Toronto region will increase by an estimated four million more people in the next generation, with the bulk of that growth coming in the 905 belt of fast-growing cities located north, east and west of Metro Toronto; and

"Whereas these cities are already large and dynamic population units, with big-city issues and big-city needs, requiring big-city resources to implement big-city solutions to social issues and human services needs; and

"Whereas the 2007-08 Ontario budget proposes aggressive and badly needed increases in operating

funding to build and strengthen capacity in developmental and social services agencies and to invest in helping the young, the weak, the needy and the vulnerable; and

"Whereas the social and human services sectors in the 905 belt have historically received per capita funding far below that of other regions despite facing far greater growth in the populations they serve, and this per capita funding gap has increased in the last four years;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the 2007-08 Ontario budget implementing measures to strengthen Ontario's families be passed without delay, and that the first priority for the allocation of new funding in meeting the government of Ontario's commitment to fairness for families flow to the social services agencies serving cities within the 905 belt, and that funding for programs to serve the 905 belt be allocated to established or growing agencies located within the 905 belt."

I support this petition. I affix my signature to it and I will ask page Andrew to carry it for me.

### CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I am pleased to present a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the lung association's Women and COPD national report 2006 reveals that more than 425,000 Canadian women have been diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and more than 4,300 will die of the disease this year; and

"Whereas the women and COPD national report indicates that since 2000, female mortality due to COPD has risen at double the rate of breast cancer;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario support a call to action for early diagnosis and optimized management of COPD to reduce illness and suffering;

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario support the Ontario Lung Association's COPD advisory panel report to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care on the prevention and management of COPD in Ontario; and

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario endorse a comprehensive strategy to address COPD in this province."

I'm pleased to present this to Grant on behalf of the residents of the riding of Durham.

### REGULATION OF ZOOS

**Ms. Deborah Matthews (London North Centre):** I have a petition here signed by literally hundreds and hundreds of people from across the province. It's a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

"Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

"Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

"Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife, and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and

"Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act."

I'm happy to support this and attach my signature to it. I'm giving it to page Justin.

### DOCTOR SHORTAGE

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** I have a petition to do with the doctor shortage in Muskoka, with many signatures from the Gravenhurst area. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we, the undersigned, are very concerned about the doctor shortage in Muskoka;

"Whereas, without increased funding for the Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare Centre, the administration will not be able to keep it as a full-service hospital;

"Whereas, without a full-service hospital in our area, we will be unable to attract doctors; and

"Whereas Muskoka has a higher-than-average percentage of 'senior' citizens; it is of great concern that we attract more doctors."

I support this petition.

### COURT SUPPORT STAFF

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I have a petition signed by a number of court support staff in the Hamilton courthouses, and it reads as follows.

"Whereas 1,400 members of the Attorney General's court support staff who are working under the flexible, part-time (FPT) model, otherwise referred to as appendix 32 under a collective agreement between Management Board of Cabinet, the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union negotiated in the spring of 2005, are working hundreds of hours per week in the service of the Attorney General for which they are not getting paid; and

"Whereas under the FPT agreement many court support staff are working as many as 20 hours or more per week for which payment is being withheld and will not be paid until months later, and

"Whereas when the makeup pay does eventually get paid, up to 50% may be lost to taxes because of the taxation year into which that payment may fall; and

"Whereas many of the Attorney General's court support staff who are being forced to work under these

conditions are single mothers with fixed living expenses who incur employment-related expenses such as child care and travel costs for those hours that they are required to work but for which they are not getting paid; and

"Whereas in many cases these expenses are impossible to pay without the offsetting income which is being withheld by the Attorney General under the FPT agreement; and

"Whereas many of the Attorney General's court support staff have been left no other choice but to resign from these impossible working conditions and, in many cases, are being forced onto the welfare rolls by the very government for which they are providing hundreds of hours of work for which they are not being paid in a timely manner; and

"Whereas the FPT agreement which is causing such hardship for employees of the Attorney General was negotiated by and entered into between the Ministry of the Attorney General, Management Board of Cabinet and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union; and

"Whereas the employees to whom this agreement applies insist that the terms of the agreement and their practical implications were not fully disclosed to them at the time the agreement was proposed for ratification; and

"Whereas the employees affected by this agreement have repeatedly appealed to OPSEU, the Attorney General and the Premier to point out the unfairness of being forced to work hundreds of hours without being paid for that work and the hardship this practice is causing in the lives of many employees, and

"Whereas repeated appeals to the Attorney General and to the Premier that they step in to ensure fair treatment of Attorney General employees are being ignored;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to call upon the Premier, the Attorney General and the Chair of Management Board of Cabinet to take whatever steps are necessary to change the offensive provisions of the FPT agreement as set out in appendix 32 and ensure that the Attorney General's court support staff receive fair treatment as employees of the government and that among other unfair provisions of the agreement, the practice of withholding pay for hours worked cease immediately."

I agree with this petition. I've signed it and send it to the table by way of a page whose name I can't see.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Pursuant to standing order 30(b), it now being past 4 p.m., I am now required to call orders of the day.

1600

### OPPOSITION DAY

#### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** I move that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that Ontario is facing a crisis when it comes to job losses;



That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that this crisis is evidenced by the following sampling of newspaper headlines:

"It's Tragic—It Really Is; MPP Concerned About Trend of Manufacturing Jobs Fleeing Area," Brantford Expositor, Thursday, May 10, 2007;

"MTD Plant Closes; Kitchener Loses 400 More Jobs," Kitchener-Waterloo Record, Saturday, May 12, 2007;

"Manufacturing Sector Suffers as Leaders Fiddle," Welland Tribune, Monday, April 16, 2007;

"Sweet Job Market Turning Sour," National Post, Tuesday, March 13, 2007;

"Ontario Fares Poorly in Employment Report," Toronto Star, Friday, January 26, 2007;

"Region Struck Hard by Manufacturing Job Losses," Ottawa Citizen, Friday, February 23, 2007;

"City Mill Faces Grim Outlook...," Hamilton Spectator, Wednesday, February 28, 2007;

"Nortel's Last Cuts May Be the Cruellest," Ottawa Citizen, Thursday, February 8, 2007;

"Abitibi to Shutter Fort William Mill," Toronto Star, February 21, 2007;

"Losses Called Long Term," Windsor Star, Thursday, February 15, 2007;

"One-Way Street Oil Riches Irresistible; For the First Time, Ontario Can't Make Up For the Loss of its Young People to Thriving Alberta," Toronto Star, Saturday, March 3, 2007;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that these headlines represent just a fraction of the 137,000 manufacturing jobs lost in this province since the start of 2005;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that 13,000 of these manufacturing jobs were lost in April 2007 alone;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that this is a situation that is untenable;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that, at a time when we are losing well-paying manufacturing jobs, policies like the job-killing diamond tax must be repealed;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that the McGuinty Liberals have still failed to act on the motion introduced by the official opposition and passed by this House on December 8, 2005, calling for the creation of a comprehensive jobs plan; and

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario call once again on the McGuinty Liberals to bring forward a comprehensive jobs plan to spur job creation throughout the province in general and in the manufacturing sector in particular.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Tory has moved opposition day number 5. I'm pleased to recognize the Leader of the Opposition for his leadoff speech.

**Mr. Tory:** I'm sorry in a way that we have to bring this same resolution, in effect, forward again, because at the end of the day, you would have thought when the House voted as it did in December 2005 that this would

have resulted in our seeing a comprehensive jobs plan coming from this government.

The fact is, if you go back to December 2005, at that time the number all of us were using in this House, in discussing manufacturing job losses in the preceding one-year period—going back, I think, to November 2004—was 52,000, a little over 52,000 manufacturing jobs. So that prompted us, as well it should have, to bring forward a motion saying that we needed urgently a comprehensive jobs plan in Ontario to help address the concerns of those 52,000 families and many others who were obviously seen in jeopardy at that time.

Let me just read three quotes from that day in the Legislature from Liberal members who spoke at that time. The first was the Honourable Joe Cordiano, who has since resigned from this House—but he said, and I quote from Hansard: "So we've looked at a number of options with respect to a real economic development plan that is being considered and is taking shape." That's what he said in December 2005.

The member for Perth—Middlesex said in December 2005, in that debate in this House: "I also want to say quite clearly that when the opposition say we don't have a plan, it's merely because they can't read. They can't read our budget. Our budget is our plan. That is the government plan."

Then, of course, there was the member for Pickering—Ajax—Uxbridge, Mr. Arthurs, who said: "We have a sound economic strategy, and the results are showing."

Well, that day, the House voted 44 to 0 in favour of our resolution from the Progressive Conservative Party calling for a comprehensive action plan on jobs—31 Liberal members of provincial Parliament voted in favour of that resolution. You have the quotes from Mr. Cordiano, Mr. Wilkinson and Mr. Arthurs, those three members of provincial Parliament, who all said, "We have a plan. It's going to come, or you've already seen it in the budget," and so on and so forth.

Well, what's happened since December 2005? Two things have happened. Many things have happened, but there are two things I want to draw attention to today. First, we have not seen any comprehensive jobs plan come forward from this government whatsoever, nothing that even resembles a plan. But, secondly, and this is the real tragedy, the total of manufacturing jobs lost since the beginning of 2005 is now up to 135,000 manufacturing jobs lost; 135,000 families without a paycheque; 135,000 people without the dignity of a job; 135,000 people who might have expected, based on that debate, that because they are citizens who pay their taxes and live in Ontario, their government would be there for them. They have been deeply disappointed, let down at their moment of greatest need by the McGuinty government and by this Premier.

It's not just that we've seen poor, inadequate action from this government—we've seen some of that: poor, inadequate action. Their answer to 135,000 jobs lost: a manufacturers' council, which I'm sure is using some of those millions of dollars worth of hotel rooms this gov-



ernment is famous for using at the taxpayers' expense when hospital emergency rooms are in chaos, children with autism go without help and farmers struggle day after day. So I'm sure the manufacturers' council is having its meetings. Heaven knows what they are doing. We'll be the last to know.

In northwestern Ontario, they appointed a facilitator. This is another example of poor, inadequate action—a facilitator. I'm sure there are lots of towns that have been devastated by what has gone on in the forest industry in northwestern Ontario that are deeply comforted by the fact that there's a facilitator, as good a man as he may be—and he is a good man—going around doing, again, heaven knows what to help these people. So it's not just poor, inadequate action, and it's not just no action, because no action—there's a long list of that. There is no jobs plan, there is no tax relief, there is no jobs commissioner, there is no decentralization, there is no regulatory relief. None of those things has been done by this government. That's just a list of a short number of examples of no action.

It's even worse than that. It's not just poor, inadequate action, it's not just no action, it's making things worse. They have actually proactively done things to make things worse. Of course example number one, exhibit number one, is the diamond tax. This is an example where we actually had someone coming here and investing \$1 billion in creating jobs, many of which are going to go to our aboriginal people, and what is the response of this government? Having stood there, and without any ounce of shame whatsoever having extolled the virtues of Ontario's low tax environment for diamond mining, they then turn around in the dark of night and have a tax grab that could only be described as shameful and that was described by one of the people involved in that project as something you expect from a Third World country.

Even before the Third World-style diamond tax grab by Mr. McGuinty and his government, here is what the CFIB had to say about Dalton McGuinty and his government. They said that the McGuinty Liberals have "greatly increased the regulation and red tape faced by small businesses." There's an example of doing something that's worse than poor, inadequate action, worse than no action. This is the government proactively taking action to make it more difficult for businesses to decide to locate here or to stay here or to stay in business here, and we hear about it day after day after day as we go around the province.

How about the C.D. Howe Institute? What did they say? They said, "Ontario is exceptional—in a bad sense, unfortunately—with the most burdensome business taxes in Canada." You know, it's interesting; our friends opposite mock the CFIB. They mock the C.D. Howe Institute. These are people who are out there objectively looking at what is needed to spur the economy of this province and to attract investment in jobs, and the reason they mock those organizations is because they don't care about that. They don't care. They don't recognize the fact that the first thing people are entitled to have in this province is a

job and an opportunity for themselves and their children, and without those jobs, without that prosperity, we can't pay for health care, we can't pay for education, unless there are people who decide to invest. So when they mock the C.D. Howe Institute and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, they are mocking the people of Ontario, they are mocking the need for prosperity and they are mocking the fact that we need that prosperity to pay for health care and education.

What do I hear when I travel around the province? I'm sure my colleagues on all sides of the House, if they were being honest, would say they hear the same thing. The number of places I visit—I have been to every riding once and almost all twice now, at least, and sometimes six and seven times. Here is what they say over and over again: The regulations and the attitude of the McGuinty government towards small businesses in particular, but also larger businesses, is crushing them. They say they are spending more time meeting with inspectors of all kinds who show up day after day than they are focusing on how to improve the productivity of their businesses and save jobs.

I was in Timmins recently, and a man came up and told me that in a one-month period he had had five different ministries in, having various and sundry officials and inspectors and paper pushers visiting his place of business. Two of them came and told him to do things that were directly contradictory to one another. He said he hardly had time between the meetings themselves, the phone calls and the paperwork to actually focus on keeping his business going and keeping the jobs going for people in Timmins.

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People tell me the power supply is both costly and unreliable. The costly part we all know about because, since Mr. McGuinty took office as Premier, we have seen power rates skyrocket and go through the roof. The reliability thing came as a bit of a surprise to me. When I started to go to plant after plant, especially in southwestern Ontario, they said they have flicker after minor outage after outage and what this costs them in terms of their lost productivity, money out of their pockets. I heard it in Collingwood; I heard it in London; I heard it in Strathroy. I've heard all over were the province that this is costing jobs and discouraging people from investing here.

People talk about taxes. The C.D. Howe Institute said that taxes are a big disadvantage for Ontario, or are becoming a big disadvantage, and these people across the way, the government, just shrug and say, "Well, too bad."

The border is still in poor shape. You hear about it everywhere—basically from Mississauga West, and I'm sure if you asked more people, you would hear about it everywhere in the province. They say there are no protocols in place to make sure that the border functions as smoothly as possible, and we are seeing no action from this government to actually get some things done there.



The municipalities are suffering as a result of this. They will tell you that in municipality after municipality as businesses close, as plants close, as people are laid off, the municipalities suffer because their tax base starts to erode, and it has a mushrooming effect as small stores close downtown, and things like that happen because of the loss of jobs.

Of course, displaced workers tell you themselves, when you meet with them, as I have done, that they feel they are dealt with in a kind of episodic fashion. Once in a while, if there happens to be a program that fits, then they get somebody looking after them, but otherwise they are left to fend with themselves. While some of them will tell us that they have found new jobs, they are usually much lower-paying, much less secure jobs than they had before.

So what do we need? First and foremost, we need what I asked the Premier about in this House today. We need some leadership. He doesn't know what that means. He goes around talking about the exuberance people are feeling in Kitchener-Waterloo. I will concede that there is some good news there, but there also have been 7,000 people in that area who have lost their jobs—7,000 people, and all he can talk about is exuberance. He talks about a little bit of contraction in the auto industry when 17,000 people have lost their jobs in the assembly and parts business. He refers to, and I quote, “some challenges” facing manufacturing when 135,000 people have lost their jobs. “Some challenges” is what that becomes.

This man I think has a heavy responsibility in this province. It's time he woke up and said, “We have a crisis in Ontario when it comes to jobs. We had a crisis in December 2005, when we said we needed a plan”—when his members of provincial Parliament voted for it, and yet since then he has done next to nothing about it. It's time he showed some leadership. It's not about minimizing the devastation that people are experiencing, hundreds of thousands of people and their families and other businesses that face spinoff side effects of these layoffs. It's not about blaming someone else, which is his greatest area of expertise, blaming somebody else for anything that goes on. That is what we need first and foremost: some leadership.

Secondly, we need to see people starting to work together. Mr. Paton of the Canadian Chemical Producers' Association, whom I referred to in question period today, said that political parties in this country and in this province have to start working together to develop some solutions. I thought we had a good start on that when we actually unanimously passed a resolution calling for a comprehensive jobs plan. You'd have thought that meant the 31 Liberals who voted for it might have gone to their caucus and their Premier and said, “Now produce the plan.” No such luck.

I think they should try asking for advice and then following it, as a third thing to do. Why bother appointing a forest industry council of the best people from labour and business and government and the aboriginal communities and so on and then turn around and not follow half the advice they gave?

Fourthly, they've got to stop doing things to make the situation worse, exhibit one being the diamond tax, and all manner of other regulations and charges and levies and so forth that they've brought in that just make it harder and harder for risk-takers and entrepreneurs to keep jobs here, let alone create new ones.

Finally, they should bring in a plan. They voted for one in December 2005. They talk about the fact that they have one. Let's put it all together and see what they call a plan. Bring it in. It should have been in the budget; it wasn't. It hasn't been done anywhere else.

I find it passing strange that the Premier of this province can find the time to go rushing out to the airport like a little boy to stand there and await the arrival of Governor Schwarzenegger—only because he's a movie star, quite frankly. There have been people who have come to this province to discuss creating jobs here and investing here, people who have come to say that they might not create jobs here if we don't smarten up our act. Nobody goes to the airport, let alone the Premier of this province, to pick up those people. He's not out there holding a sign, like some limousine company, saying, “Mr. Schwarzenegger, your car is here.” They're not there for those people. When those people come here and say that they're going to withdraw investment from this province because they're being treated like a Third World country, there's nobody at the airport to see them.

It's time we got serious about this and started to devote some time and energy to this. It's time we started to see some leadership from Mr. McGuinty in the short period of time he has left. Because I'll tell you what, Mr. Speaker: Even if he acted today, it would join the long list of their deathbed repentances. We're in the last minute of the last hour of the last days of their sorry term in government, and they finally decide that it's time to act for the environment, that it's time to act on jobs, that it's time to do something in all the areas they've neglected. People are not going to be fooled by this.

Even so, I would say that if they have four months left—and it's all they've got left—bring in a comprehensive jobs plan. We'll stay here until they bring it some time in June, because the people of Ontario deserve nothing less from their government.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South-Weston):** I want to commend the Leader of the Opposition, not just for his motion this afternoon but for his passionate and spirited critique of this government. It was good to hear. I do quibble with the fixation on tax cuts; I think that's the wrong approach. But I do want to speak to some of his points and also to some of the points that New Democrats have articulated in this House on the crisis—and it is a very real crisis—that is leading to massive job losses, especially in the manufacturing sector here in Ontario.

As we know, during the term of this government—I would call it a failed term—we have lost now almost 175,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs across the province. In the Leader of the Opposition's motion, he rhymes off a number of recent headlines that talk about



these job losses across our province: in southwestern Ontario, in the Niagara Peninsula, in eastern Ontario, in greater Toronto area, and in northern Ontario.

He could have actually referred to a couple of headlines from this very day in newspapers across the province. In Windsor, we are seeing the loss of nearly 500 well-paying jobs today with the closure of Windsor Casting. The headline in today's Windsor Star is rather poignant. It reads, "End of a Marvellous Era for Windsor Casting." The story talks about the positive financial impact that plant had for almost three quarters of a century. It is now, as of end of business today, gone, and those workers and their families are left to grapple with a most difficult future: how to pay the mortgage; how to make payments on the cars; how to send those kids to university and make those tuition payments. Those are the real-life difficulties that are being confronted by tens of thousands of hard-working families across this province.

While we took our constituency week break, I had the chance to attend two events dealing precisely with this topic, with the crisis in manufacturing faced by the province. Last Thursday, I attended a rally organized by the United Steelworkers in Mississauga at a company called CFM. There, we are about to witness the total loss of almost 400 jobs at that particular plant. I addressed the rally and I had a chance to go around and speak to the individual workers, some of whom have already lost their jobs and some who have received notice that their jobs are gone within a matter of six weeks. Some of these folks have put in 10, 15, 20 years for this company. These are well-paying jobs. These are workers who earn upwards of \$20 an hour. They have been able to build strong lives with this employment at CFM and now they're faced with an uncertain future.

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When I talked to these workers, two things struck me: One, how demoralized they are that their provincial government is refusing to act in their interest to speak out for them, and secondly, how angry they are that this is the case. It's not just the workers at CFM; it's workers elsewhere. But it was the workers at CFM who left quite an indelible imprint on my memory after speaking with them last Thursday.

A few days earlier, I had the pleasure of attending a town hall meeting here in Toronto, organized by the Toronto and York Region Labour Council. That particular town hall meeting drew several hundred workers, not just from Toronto and York region but some of them coming from as far away as Hamilton, and a couple from eastern Ontario. They were given an opportunity to rise and to speak, to share their stories. There were representatives there not just from Queen's Park—in fact, there were only two of us there from Queen's Park: my colleague from Parkdale-High Park and I—but there were folks there from agencies like the United Way, folks who operated manufacturing concerns and of course, labour leaders. What you heard, one after the other after the other, were workers getting up—some of

them in tears—and talking about the difficulties that they are facing as a result of the jobs that they have lost. It was indeed a shame that despite the invitation that was extended to every single member on the government side from the greater Toronto area, not a single one of them showed up at this town hall meeting to hear from their own constituents, to hear from hundreds of workers from this province who are facing a very uncertain future as a result of job losses and government inaction.

In the greater Toronto area alone, the tally—and it's mounting, week by week, month by month—105,000 jobs lost in the GTA alone over the past four years. That represents \$5.3 billion in lost wages. Now, \$5.3 billion is a huge sum, and it's useful, I think, to break it down. For a worker at a place like CFM, it's a \$40,000- or \$45,000-a-year job, stable income—gone. For one of the workers who worked in the auto plants sector and who spoke at the town hall meeting organized by the labour council, it was a \$48,000 job gone, a job that she used to put two of her young kids through school so that they would have a better future. That is the reality that is faced by these workers. Now, 105,000, if you want to—in the greater Toronto area alone—if you want to break it down: Tower Automotive, 178 jobs lost; Mueller Canada, 158 jobs lost; Smurfit-Stone container, 140 families out of work.

In my own riding of York South-Weston, for many years—and I've referenced this in the past here in this House—we had upwards of 3,000 and 4,000 people employed by Kodak; well-paying jobs that led to a thriving community in the heart of my riding. Every single one of those jobs is now gone. Hundreds of families in my riding are losing their livelihood out of their income. Perhaps it's telling that the Premier's response to this crisis—this was from an article that appeared in the St. Catharines paper just last month. He said, "Those who lose their jobs in the manufacturing jobs can find jobs in other sectors." What kind of leadership is that?

I'll tell you what's happening in my riding with the Kodak lands, and perhaps this is what the Premier was referring to. In my riding on 52 acres of prime industrial land, what they're looking at building are big-box retail stores: jobs that will pay \$8, or perhaps, if the employees are lucky, \$9, maybe close to \$10, per hour. That's what these workers in my riding are being faced with.

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington):** With no benefits.

**Mr. Ferreira:** With no benefits: non-unionized, no-benefits jobs that are less than ideal to try to support a family, to try to pay the bills that you need to pay in order to be able to survive from month to month. What's happening is that in my riding, these workers who are losing well-paying jobs, not just at Kodak but elsewhere, are lining up at the job fair to try to land one of those part-time jobs with the Wal-Marts and the Home Depots and maybe even with the fellows who have the golden arches, trying to gain one or two or three of those jobs just to be able to make ends meet. It is indeed a crisis. In fact, "crisis" may understate what's happening here in the province of Ontario.



We have heard in some communities the unemployment rate. In Windsor, as an example, the unemployment rate is now more than 13%; 13.1% was the number that I heard this past weekend. In my riding, the unemployment rate is about that number; it's 12% or 13%. During a period of time when we have seen so much prosperity created, it hasn't trickled down to those who work very hard, who toil very, very hard for a good wage in the manufacturing sector.

New Democrats have proposed a number of aggressive measures to help deal with this crisis. In this House less than a month ago, I had the pleasure of speaking in support of one of those measures put forward by our leader, the member from Kenora-Rainy River. He called quite articulately for the creation of a jobs protection commissioner. It's just a start, but it's an important start. We've seen a similar office in the province of British Columbia save 75,000 good, well-paying jobs.

#### *Interjection.*

**Mr. Ferreira:** To the member from Essex: by working with not just the workers and labour but also with the employer to come up with constructive and creative ways to save those jobs. That commissioner was an honest broker between all interested parties, and that commissioner had a profound impact on some of those communities in British Columbia. In fact, if you go to British Columbia today, you'll see the very good results that that commissioner was able to impart in communities that would otherwise have seen major employment losses; in fact, the closure of the only employer in those specific communities. Again, it's an idea that's required here in Ontario. It's an idea the New Democrats have advanced and have shown great leadership on.

There are other proposals that we've put forward and that my leader is equally passionate about. First of all, Ontario is a generator of some of the most cost-effective electricity in the entire world, yet this government's hydro policy has been an unmitigated disaster for Ontario's resource and manufacturing industries. I hear some scoffing over on the other side, but that's the reality, and they can't get away from that. They may try their darnedest to get away from that record, but that is the record. Their electricity policy has been an abject failure, and that has contributed to the mounting number of job losses.

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I mentioned earlier that I had to disagree with the leader of the official opposition in terms of his fixation with tax cuts. I would suggest that targeted governmental investment initiatives are a much better use of the existing tax revenue that the province collects from industry. Again, it's a concept that works in other provinces—in Quebec, where the Société générale de financement exists, which makes meaningful investments in manufacturing, in the resource sectors, again an idea that works elsewhere that can be implemented here in Ontario with a government that's willing to implement those kinds of measures.

We also think that an important way to protect jobs here in Ontario is to modernize employment standards

legislation, tougher laws that would discourage plant closures and provide protection for workers who so badly need it; again, another good idea being championed by our party.

Before coming to this House, I worked in the workplace training field. Again, the province is sorely in need of increasing on-the-job training efforts and initiatives, and that's something that our party has talked about. That's something that can be done in partnership with both labour and employers, to ensure that workers are trained, that they are competitive with the global realities of today's marketplace, and that we can retain the jobs that we so badly need to retain if hard-working Ontarians are to have a prosperous future.

Mr. Speaker, we have waited in this House—and we have passed resolutions in the past on a very similar topic. We have waited three and a half long years for action from this government. We have seen, over the past few weeks, a mad dash to the finish line, legislation being brought forward, desperately trying to check off those commitments in those platform documents. We have seen very little in the way of ideas, of measures, of legislation to protect well-paying manufacturing jobs in this province. This government has been delinquent on that front. It is hard-working Ontario families who are paying the price for that delinquency.

I referenced earlier my visit last week to a place where almost 400 jobs are being lost in Mississauga, and those workers and their families are angry. I think that anger will manifest itself at the ballot box on October 10, and then we will be able to bring in effective employment protection legislation that will resolve the crisis. I'm afraid that under this present government, with this lack of leadership, we will continue to see, unfortunately, more and more job losses between now and October 10.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** It's my privilege to stand today and spend a few minutes speaking about the opposition day motion of Mr. Tory. I certainly didn't come here today thinking that there would be anything flattering in it, but I did come here today thinking there would be something in it.

The only recommendation in this motion from the Tories that we're going to spend this whole afternoon on is that there is a diamond tax that must be repealed, and you know what? That isn't even in the manufacturing business; that's in the mining business. Most resolutions that come before this House at least have some recommendations in them. This has none. It's hollow. That's all there is to it. In fact, in question period today the leader of the official opposition made reference to somebody who was suggesting—I think the words were that all three parties should be working together. One would think, then, that out of that would come a suggestion from the official opposition. There is none.

The third party has recommended a jobs commissioner. I asked, "What does the jobs commissioner do?" They said, "The jobs commissioner works with industry and works with labour." Well, we have an industrial de-



velopment minister who does that, and I'll give you a few examples of how she does it. What the member didn't mention about their suggestion is why that jobs commissioner no longer exists in British Columbia.

So this suggestion about—the only thing it says here is, “Bring forward a comprehensive jobs plan.” That's kind of like the people who stand around and say, “We have to do something,” and they stop there. They don't suggest—not one suggestion—what you have to do or how the three parties could work together to bring forward some recommendations that he seems to support.

Let me tell you what we have done just in Windsor; I only have time today to cover what has happened in Windsor. You're right: Windsor is an area that's suffering significantly because we depend so much on the automotive business. Both the Windsor area and Michigan share some of this crisis—and I agree that it is a crisis. But you would stand there and it would sound like we're doing absolutely nothing. This afternoon, when the Premier stood up and said, “Well, Mr. Leader of the Opposition, what about the half a billion dollars that we've put into the automotive industry?” he sat there with a blank look on his face, like we've done nothing.

We have done something. The Windsor economic development summit was given \$50,000 to carry out a two-day summit that will bring together stakeholders from the public, private and educational sectors to develop a coordinated strategy for regional economic development—provincial funding. I haven't seen any federal funding for it.

Machine, tool, die and mould industry support: More than one quarter of Ontario's tool and die industry is concentrated in Windsor-Essex, primarily supplying the auto industry. As a result, this sector has been significantly impacted by the ongoing restructuring in North America's auto industry. This initiative, into which we're putting \$200,000, will, for instance, help in the aerospace, oil and gas, transportation and packaging sectors. Customers will benefit from hands-on workshop sessions and marketing support to assist them in new business and to make improvements in the area of innovation and productivity. We have been doing something. Isn't this something that a job commissioner would normally do? We have a minister who's doing this in the Windsor area.

Workforce development initiative: The growth in the health care, education and tourism sectors is contributing to the diversification of the Windsor-Essex economy beyond traditional manufacturing. Some \$50,000 is provided by provincial funding for an initiative to focus on the development of labour adjustment services to assist displaced workers in securing new employment, which will also feature a comprehensive assessment of local skills and training. We have people in my riding who have taken up the challenge. They think that there's a growing agri-tourism business in our area that hasn't even been tapped before. Sometimes it takes a crisis situation, it takes a difficult situation, for us to think about those kinds of things, and we're helping them in the development of this new agri-business.

We have greenhouses that are still being built in our area that have been hurt by the Canadian dollar's strength, but notwithstanding that, they have the initiative to go ahead and continue to build and expand their business through new technology. We've helped the greenhouse industry with \$5 million recently, as a matter of fact, for marketing.

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So to stand there and say that this government has done nothing is simply not fair. That's why I have to stand up and say what we've done, because somebody has to at least acknowledge that something is being done in these areas. I'm pleased that our government has recognized the issues that are in front of us in the Windsor-Essex area and that it has made these investments, notwithstanding the investment that was made in the auto industry as a whole.

I want to quote from Buzz Hargrove, president of the Canadian Auto Workers, at a rally that was held in Windsor on Sunday. We were standing right beside labour in its effort to make other parts of Ontario, other parts of Canada, and perhaps even the federal government, which, as I say, to my knowledge has done absolutely nothing in the Essex-Windsor area—but we were standing up together. “‘It's not inevitable that we lose our jobs,’ Canadian Auto Workers union president Buzz Hargrove told the massive crowd, noting that 20 million vehicles will sell in North America in 2007. ‘Our problem is not selling vehicles. Our problem is that people who are building them are, for the most part today, in Japan and South Korea, shipping into our market and refusing to allow our products into their markets.’”

“Hargrove and other labour leaders”—like Ken Lewenza, a great leader of labour in the Windsor-Essex area—“want trade laws which require countries that sell vehicles in Canada to buy as many Canadian-made cars or build as many in this country” and allow access to their market. That too will help, if the federal government would just come to the table.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** Of course, the member for Essex will recognize that the recommendation that we have made is for this government to bring in a comprehensive jobs program, one which we would be pleased to help them with if they could only come to recognize the fact that that's one of the areas that would be needed to start to turn the manufacturing sector around in this province.

This government has wreaked havoc on families across Ontario. There have been 137,000 high-paying, full-time jobs that have been lost in this province—jobs that you can count on, jobs that you can buy a house on, jobs that you can buy a car on, jobs that you can raise a family on. Those jobs are gone in Ontario today.

It's all across Ontario. The Dana Corp. in St. Marys has laid off 100 workers; the Dow Chemical industry in Sarnia is closing their plant, 380 workers gone; Collins and Aikman manufacturing in Toronto, 400 jobs gone through closure; Alcoa in Collingwood, 330 jobs in the automotive manufacturing business gone; Dura



Automotive Systems in Stratford, 280 jobs laid off. That list goes on and on. I've got eight pages. I've read a quarter of one page. There are eight pages, and this is not an exhaustive list. This list probably captures half the job layoffs and closures in Ontario. Those jobs are gone.

Each one of those jobs on that list, and many more that aren't on that list, represents a broken dream, a family without a major income in the province of Ontario. Why? Because this government saw its way clear, in its first budget, to bring in the largest tax increase in Ontario's history. It represented \$4.5 billion in tax increases. You can't increase taxes against small business and corporations and expect them to remain in this jurisdiction when you're uncompetitive with surrounding jurisdictions. And that started the ball rolling. Small business taxes went up 25%; corporate taxes went up 27%. It was the largest tax increase in Ontario's history. The second-largest tax increase was brought in by Bob Rae in the early 1990s—1992, I think it was. It was a paltry \$2.4 billion. This one was almost double it, along with the increased costs of inputs such as electricity, taxes, fuel, labour, property tax—the list goes on and on. Ontario has now fallen in Canada to the last-place jurisdiction in job creation and in expansion of new business, in investments. In the escalation of electricity costs, we're number one. We have risen the fastest in that area. We're the lowest-growth in disposable income. That list goes on and on as well.

It is with sadness that we point out that this government has failed, that this government doesn't deserve to be re-elected, and that the people of Ontario will send a very direct message to this government on October 10 of this year.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** Generally when I get up to engage in debate in this Legislature I usually start by saying that I'm pleased to have the opportunity to discuss whatever matter tends to be at hand. Unfortunately, I have to tell you that I'm not very pleased to be in a position of having to talk yet again about the significant crisis in manufacturing job losses that we have in Ontario. Not a day goes by when this issue is not hitting me straight in the face, coming from the city of Hamilton, which of course was once—many, many moons ago—one of the largest drivers of not only the Ontario economy but the Canadian economy in terms of its massive steel sector and all of the secondary employers and companies, manufacturing operations, that followed on from the steel sector.

Unfortunately, I'm here to tell you that I support the resolution provided to us today by the opposition. It goes on on a number of different issues, but the basic one is the real fact that this government has done little to nothing to stave off or stem the number of jobs being lost in this province.

I wish I didn't have to say that. But I came from a rally in a public forum Friday night in my own community where worker after worker and union leader after union leader got to the microphone and talked about the devastation that was being felt in our community. We

had people come from other communities as well to talk about their particular situations. In fact, that very day—I guess it was really a day or two before—I was in Brantford at a company that is watching its product being cut into shreds in terms of the ability to provide it in the market, because the major place they supply their product to has decided to start getting that product, after having gotten it for decades from this particular firm, from China. So those workers who have been employed by a company where workers are paid a decent wage—it's organized by the Steelworkers, so there's a collective agreement in place—where there are health and safety committees, where the safety and well-being of workers are looked after, where we know that they have pensions and benefits and can sustain a decent quality of life for their families—those are the kinds of jobs, when we say “manufacturing job losses,” that we're losing across the province.

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That particular company, Koolatron, is in Brantford. I met with the head of the company there as well as the union. In fact, the head of the company provided the opportunity for the workers to rally on his site, have a barbecue and really bring forward these issues in that community, because he felt it was not a fight for only the workers but it was a fight for the employers as well. Unfortunately, the Liberals don't think it's a fight worth fighting. At least, that's not what appears to be the case from my own experience.

That's certainly the sense I got not only in Brantford but in the rally that took place in my own community. People came from Brantford to the rally in Hamilton and spoke very passionately about the concerns they have, but so did workers from Rheem Canada, Camco, Levi's, and Stelco's hot strip mill, which just closed down. Although Stelco itself has not closed down, we know that in the deal for restructuring that was undertaken, they have compartmentalized themselves into smaller business units. I fear that, as do many in my community, of those smaller business units, there's going to be pressure on the ones that are underperforming to eventually, one by one, close down until Hamilton Steel no longer exists in my city.

The city of Hamilton now has the highest proportion of people in Ontario living in poverty. It's definitely equal with Toronto; I don't know whether it's now surpassed Toronto or not. But that's what happens when all the good-paying jobs that provide a decent quality and standard of life are allowed to walk out the door. People no longer have the ability to not only maintain their own quality of life but to generate a secondary economy that provides all kinds of benefits and accrues all kinds of opportunity for small business and others in our community.

We watch as our children continue to not be able to learn properly at school because they're not fed properly. That's not the fault of the parents; that's the fault of the government that has turned its back, either because they are letting those manufacturing jobs go out the door or



because our social assistance rates and our opportunities for helping people who are on hard times are not being looked at seriously. There's just no way we're ever going to build a decent economy in this province if we don't get serious about the fact that we're wasting one of our precious resources, which is our children. That's simply unacceptable.

Interestingly enough, I had the unfortunate occasion of seeing a surgeon just the other day, and we were chit-chatting about a number of different issues as I was leaving the appointment. He said to me that when it comes to the issues of our children, he believes that governments have failed miserably. In fact, he said, "I'm a New Democrat when it comes to children's issues and the fact that we need to not scrim and not be tightwads when it comes to investing in our children." And yet, again today we hear a government that's not even prepared to invest federal dollars, never mind their own provincial dollars that they promised, in early learning and child care. We know that if it's done, it will be beneficial for decades to come. It will turn our economy around if we start investing in our young people when they're very young, in fact when they're mere babies. But, no, this government not only doesn't see the benefit of those long-term investments; this government is happy to watch as those kids have to see their parents end up on welfare rolls, because not only are their jobs being lost, but there are no decent jobs to go to.

The government might want to talk about how great they've done in job creation, but when you come to a community like Hamilton and ask one single person who has been laid off, one of those thousands and thousands of workers who have been laid off in my community, how many of those people were hired again or are back in the workforce at the same wages and benefits, how many of them have their pensions intact, the answer is quite startling, because it is zero. It's not 5%, 10%, 20%. It is zero.

The Premier talks proudly about a worker adjustment centre that they're setting up in Windsor for the Ford workers who just got laid off today when their plant closed. He talks proudly about their adjustment centre. Well, guess what? Go to that adjustment centre in three months or in six months and see how many of those workers are actually being paid the same amount as when they were laid off at Ford today. You'll find that not a single one of them will be. You can't put your head in the sand and pretend that the economy is generating the kinds of jobs that we need to see to replace the ones that you're allowing to walk out the door. It's simply not happening and it's unacceptable.

If the level of frustration is high around here and if the opposition thinks that they need to use yet another opposition day on a motion very similar to one that they presented in the past, very recently, then I say more power to that as a concept. Maybe if we keep saying it over and over again, the provincial government will get the picture that we are absolutely in a manufacturing jobs crisis and that it's not good enough to talk about it.

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** Sure, if you keep saying something untrue over and over again, some people will believe it.

**Ms. Horwath:** People like my friend Brad Duguid here make fun of it and think it's a joke. He needs to come to Hamilton and look at what's happening in Hamilton.

I think the cabinet actually was in Hamilton recently. I wonder if they talked to any of the laid off—oh no, that's right. There was a rally that day. There was a sit-in at Hamilton Specialty Bar, one of the companies that's closing its door as we speak. There was a worker there who chained himself to a piece of machinery the same day that Dalton McGuinty was in town making a re-announcement about some hospital funding. He's so out of touch that he didn't even know there was a crisis happening where the workers were having a sit-in. They were taking over one of our local manufacturing plants. He was totally off the radar.

Here's the Premier going to Hamilton, one of the communities with one of the highest poverty rates in this province, to make some glossy announcement, some feel-good happiness, about a couple of dollars for our hospitals. Meanwhile, jobs are walking out the door, and he doesn't even know what's happening. It really does speak to the reality in this province that the Premier himself has no idea what's happening when he visits these communities. He thinks that getting off a plane to Hamilton—taking a plane from Toronto to Hamilton, yes—getting off a plane and making an announcement at a hospital is going to be enough for the people of Hamilton and that they're going to think he's doing a good job. Well, I've got news for him: The people of Hamilton don't think he's doing a good job and we're going to see that spoken loudly and clearly, I'm pretty sure, when it comes to October 10, and the votes start getting counted at the ballot box, because those votes are certainly not going to support a government that has turned its back on the working people of this province.

The Liberals who are in here, they're making fun and jeering and saying, "It's not good enough to be doom and gloom," and "You can't just be critical." The bottom line is that we have brought a number of issues forward in this Legislature; my leader, Howard Hampton, has. We have had a number of positive, proactive—proactive, yes. You know, that's where you actually do something and try to get ahead of the game, try to be proactive as opposed to hiding your head in the sand and hoping that everything is going to go away, which appears to be the *modus operandi* of this particular government. It's not working for you.

It's time you started looking seriously at some of the suggestions that are coming forward. Let's not pretend that the suggestions haven't been coming forward, because they have. My friend the member for York-South Weston had already mentioned a couple of those issues around the job protection commissioner. I know the Liberals make fun of it, but it saved 80,000 jobs in British Columbia when it was in place, and it took a



Liberal government to get rid of that. I guess they're not going to support it simply because of poor partisanship, which is unfortunate.

Although they like to talk about it and say that all parties should get together, the bottom line is the only reason they're not looking seriously at a job commissioner is because it was an NDP government that thought it up in BC and it was a Liberal government that got rid of it, so they have to play the same game. It is just silly and sad that when it comes to the reality of job losses in the province of Ontario, they have to play silly partisan games.

What else is there? He talked about electricity pricing, which we've raised a gagillion times. In fact, the Association of Major Power Consumers in Ontario, which are the big manufacturers—go figure—told this government two years ago or more that their electricity pricing and their strategy for hydro was the wrong thing to do and it was going to cost them lots and lots of money and make them uncompetitive and, therefore, they were going to have to shed workers. Guess what? It came true. So you have not only New Democrats giving you advice, you have the Association of Major Power Consumers in Ontario giving you advice. But you put your head in the sand and pretend that there's nothing you can do, that it's all the federal government's fault.

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Yes, I agree there are problems with trade agreements, although you seem to think that the lumber agreement is fine and you signed off on that one, which is shedding us jobs in the north. Nonetheless, now you're saying that trade agreements are the problem. Now you're saying that the high dollar is the problem. But there are things that are happening in this province, which need to happen in this province, that this government is simply not taking responsibility for.

As I mentioned, a jobs commissioner was talked about. Low-cost electricity was talked about. Sectoral investment initiatives were talked about. New employment standards legislation has been mentioned.

Pension protection: This came up again on Friday night in my community. There are workers who are all of a sudden being told, after their plants shut down and their pension plans are wound up, "Guess what? The plan's underfunded, and now you don't get your pension. The deferred wages that you've been paying into all of your working life are all of a sudden not there for you."

We put out a paper three years ago now trying to get this government to move on pension reform in this province. There's been no reform to the pension system in over 20 years in this province, and it's desperately needed. It's desperately needed in this context right now more than ever before, when workers' deferred wages are under threat day in and day out. Has this government done anything? Oh, yeah, they set up a task force that's going to report back. When's it going to report back? Oh, maybe six or eight or 10 months after the next election. Well, a heck of a lot of good that's going to do for all those 150,000 workers who have lost their jobs in

Ontario over the last couple of years. So there's something they could do to lessen the pain: have some reform in the pension system.

Our pension benefit guarantee fund only tops up pensions up to \$1,000 a month. That's not good enough. There's one thing right there that can be changed, just like that. All you need to do is just change it like that. I've got a whole document; I'll give it to you if you want. You want to do start doing something productive? There's a productive suggestion. Don't tell me that we're not providing productive suggestions for the government, because we have been. We've been working diligently with stakeholders and others to try to come up with some of these solutions. Unfortunately, the government hasn't.

A wage earner protection fund: What about that? That's something that was in place in the province in the past. We need a system whereby there would be a fund in place, either through employer premiums or the government itself. This fund would ensure that employees receive compensation for unpaid wages. There's another idea, right?

When there's a bankruptcy or an insolvency: Another example came up on Friday night, where workers worked overtime—they worked really, really hard—at Genfast in Brantford to make sure they could be competitive again. This is what the workers told us at that forum. The parent company in the States had bought up the local company in Brantford, and instead of actually making that company thrive and continuing to invest in it, they sucked the life out of that company. The workers were convinced that if they just worked overtime, if they worked really hard, if they put everything into it, they might be able to save their company. But guess what? They couldn't, and to add insult to injury, all of those overtime hours those workers put in were not paid. They got their pink slip on a certain day. At 3 o'clock they were told that the plant was closing and everybody went home. And guess what? They were ripped off for those last couple of dollars that they had put in. So a wage earner protection fund is something we could do.

The bottom line is, there are many opportunities in this province that can be taken, many proactive initiatives that the government needs to look at. Unfortunately, they're happy to see companies like Rheem, Camco, Stelco, Hamilton Specialty Bar, Levi Strauss—on and on it goes—walk out the door. That's not acceptable to New Democrats.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** I'm going to spend a couple of minutes just to explain briefly what I'm going to attempt to talk about this evening, get to that job and then wrap up.

The first thing I'm going to do is express, on a personal note, that a repeat of a quote I made in this House—I would say it again, and I continue to say it: Anyone losing a job is a disaster. For hard-working people to spend their life—in a lot of the cases 20, 25, 15, 10, even five years—doing a job and then be told that through no fault of their own they can't have that job



anymore is a disaster. It is unfortunate. It is something that we should all be working towards to try to see if we can prevent—the counterpoint that I would offer contrary to what the member from Hamilton East is trying to portray.

Unfortunately, the second thing that I will do is completely reject and deny some of the things that she's accosted us with, particularly me in my riding, where she shows up and fails to find out that I had a two-hour meeting with the company owner of Koolatron. Weeks before that, we announced a loan to the company to save 170 jobs, but she failed to mention that. She was conveniently trying to score political points here. I met not only with the union members, I met with the community at large about Koolatron to ensure that those jobs continue. Quite frankly, it's unfortunate that the member opposite tried to play the rhetorical game that nobody is as perfect as they are in terms of their ideas. It's quite unfortunate.

In this House, when we try to talk about debates, let's get into an actual debate instead of trying to score political points. I'll talk about the other issues that need to be referenced.

First of all the, the last piece that I will say is that the member from Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey has given us an opposition motion. I will not be in favour of it. That might sound like a surprise, that I'm not in favour of that particular motion. What's really interesting is that some of the members on the opposite side are trying to tell us that we've done nothing and that we have all the wrong ideas, yet they fail to suggest that there are some ways in which we can try to have the environment for economic prosperity. Let's go over some of those points.

Point number one: We have, whether it's acknowledged or not by the other side, by most people's judgment across the world, a world-class publicly funded health care system. That is a factor that companies look at. Better schools and higher test scores: The test scores have gone up, drop outs have gone down. What we're looking for is the signalling that an education system is another point companies look at in locating. We have a highly skilled workforce and we have new infrastructures that have been put in place. For instance, in universities and colleges, for the first time in Ontario's history, the largest sum ever given to the universities and colleges: a \$6.2-billion Reaching Higher plan for post-secondary education.

On tax competitiveness, contrary to what's been said over this side—they've tried to tell you that our taxes on the business side are not right—Ontario's corporate taxes are lower than those of our main trading partners that we export our product to, the United States Great Lakes states. That's not acknowledged by the other side. The KPMG corporate tax review of 2006 also shows that Ontario has lower rates than Japan, Germany and Italy when you combine the corporate tax structures. That's something they don't want to acknowledge: There is a corporate environment here that is allowing people to stay.

The other thing we've not heard very much of is the investments, not just in the auto sector. The auto strategy infrastructure renewal by \$5 million leveraged \$7.2 billion of investment in the auto strategies. That's not explained.

Here's something else that I spoke of—and I'm not sure whether or not the members on the other side are aware of this. I think it did get mentioned by the member from Hamilton East for one of the very few moments in which she wasn't parochial in her comments. That was the export-import of autos. For instance, there are 361 cars from Korea coming into Ontario for every one car that gets exported to Korea. Let's talk to our federal cousins about whether we should be looking at that trade.

The federal law C-55—and she wants to bring up Genfast. It's a good thing she realizes that she was going down the wrong road if she was going to blame any government for that except for the federal government. C-55 already exists. It's got royal assent, and it would not have allowed those members of Genfast to be ripped off for over \$3,000.

**Ms. Horwath:** What about their wages?

**Mr. Levac:** If the member Hamilton East would just listen for a moment—I was respecting her comments—I will do the same thing. In the Genfast situation, Bill C-55 would have protected \$3,500 of those wages: the weeks of holiday pay, the weeks of overtime and the one week of work that they went through. If the Tory government at the federal level would have simply enacted Bill C-55, every single one of those workers would have received the money that was due to them. Quite frankly, the member wants to carp and bark and chirp and yell and scream, but she does not want to listen to the actual facts. The federal government had responsibility for Genfast workers losing every dime that was taken out of their pocket.

1710

How many province-to-province free trade—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** I would ask the member for Hamilton East, the member for York South–Weston and the member for Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant to please come to order, and I'll return to the member for Brant.

**Mr. Levac:** I'm awfully sorry. I apologize for striking a nerve. I didn't really mean to do that. What I'm trying to do is make sure people understand that there are two sides to this story and the second side of this story is not being covered by this motion.

It's a little bit of a set-up to try to simply say that nobody cares. Nobody's got a monopoly on somebody losing jobs here. Quite frankly, what we have to also engage in is a Wal-Mart mentality of purchasing. Whether or not anybody wants to sit here and talk about it, let's start talking about that. If everybody has the mentality that everything must be cheaper, then we're going to have a hard time protecting those jobs, period, if we can't show a reason why that product can be bought cheaper.

The agreement for border crossings, whether or not it was mentioned over on this side, the United States border



crossing issue, the actual physical infrastructure of getting over the border—but what about trade? What about the idea of making sure that the United States didn't move with the passport? Our Premier was mocked, our Minister of Tourism was mocked, because they stood up and said that this passport thing is a problem. We had a member on the other side who stood up and simply said, "We can't tell George Bush what to do. Leave it alone. He's going to do whatever he wants to do." Then we had Stephen Harper put his hands up and simply say, "Well, that's the United States. They get to do whatever they want. The trump card of 911 works." But guess what? They've now decided to exempt children from passports. Thirty-nine states have embraced the Minister of Tourism's original proposal of a driver's licence improvement to go across the border, so that trade can go back and forth easily and the economics of the tourism industry can be improved again. So, quite frankly, the idea was there. It floated and it worked.

Another thing I would make quite clear over here: We're also looking at the monetary policies not just of Canada but of the United States, China, Korea, Pakistan and India. So let's put our heads in the sand and pretend that no other external influences are out there as to why jobs are moving. Or else we can do the NDP's way of doing things: Let's put up a big giant firewall and not allow anybody in or out, and see if they can take care of business.

Quite frankly, I think this is a muted argument. This is nothing more than a little bit of fluff at the end of this term so that the Tories can sit back and say, "We're trying to protect the jobs." They've not offered us anything except one thing. Listen carefully. Both members who have spoken have said, "Oh, we've got too many rules and regulations. We've got too much red tape." What about health and safety? What about the environment? What about the safety of the workers themselves? What rules and regulations are you going to throw out? What are you going to get rid of in order to say that the manufacturers are going to stay? Are you going to lower wages? Are you going to get rid of health and safety? Are you going to get rid of environmental concerns? Tell me. Let's hear what you're going to do for the people to keep those companies there. Are you going to tell the branch office that they're not allowed to close a branch? Let's make sure that you know what you're talking about in offering us the solutions.

We've got so many plans going on right now. One hour after Genfast closed, we had the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities bring in his squad immediately to try to get to work on retraining and getting those people jobs. We're doing stuff and we've got a job. It's health care, it's education. There are many opportunities in here for us to improve.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** In contrast to the previous speaker—and I've only got two minutes so I can't rebut everything he said—I'll just give you two examples of where this Liberal government, on a consistent basis, does not recognize the challenges in the

business community across this province. It shows up in so many ways.

I appeared before the justice committee a couple of weeks ago to talk about concerns of a company in my riding called Invista, which was formerly a DuPont operation. It's one of the major employers; it employs over 400 people. They were concerned about elements in the legislation dealing with the definition of consumptive use of water. The DuPont or Invista facility uses water out of the St. Lawrence as a cooling agent in the plant. One of the primary reasons they located there was the access to large volumes of deep and cold water. The majority of this water is borrowed and put back into the system.

I raised these concerns and the concerns that Invista itself put on the record in a letter to the government saying that with "the need to promote a strong economy ... and the importance of being competitive with other jurisdictions, the charges" this government is moving ahead with "have the potential to further reduce the hospitable nature of Ontario's business environment relative to other sites in which Invista is located around the globe." That's just a small portion of their concern. What kind of reaction did I get from the parliamentary assistant? He read a written response from the Minister of the Environment saying, "We take [this] seriously, but the notion of consumptive use remains a very critical part of this bill, and we won't be supporting the motion."

So there's 400 jobs. They don't seem to recognize the concerns with respect to this legislation getting ahead of the curve in terms of the other signatories on the Great Lakes water agreement. So not just this plant but others could be placed in a less competitive position when they have to compete with other businesses within their own company, let alone other competitors. We could be losing 400 jobs, and there doesn't seem to be any recognition, let alone concern, on the government benches. They sit there like robots reading letters written by some bureaucrat or someone in the office of the minister.

Another one which I've had recently with small businesses is the ban on the burning of waste oil in space heaters. This is an issue which is impacting so many small businesses in my region, and I'm sure across the province. All of these uses more than meet the requirements of the Ministry of the Environment. Yet, for political reasons, they're going ahead and damaging all of these businesses and putting some of them in jeopardy. That's the approach of this Liberal government in dealing with real concerns and real needs of business and ensuring that we can remain competitive and maintain jobs and attract jobs to this province. They are not doing their job. It is a crisis. As our leader, Mr. Tory, described earlier, this is a crisis. They have to recognize it, and they have to start doing something about it.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell):** I am most pleased to have the opportunity today to talk about the manufacturing sector in Ontario, a sector that is really struggling at this time. Yes, we admit



that the manufacturing sector is struggling in Ontario because of global competitive pressure, and we would like to see Ottawa, the feds, get involved in this sector.

I was just looking at job creation since the election of the McGuinty government. We have created 322,500 jobs since the election of the McGuinty government in October 2003. This means that we have created 2.5 jobs for every single job lost in Ontario. I have to say that probably those jobs that were created, they're not \$40-an-hour jobs, but we have to be competitive. But I'm sure that many of those jobs are well-paid jobs. Minister Papatello, along with Premier McGuinty, recently spear-headed major business missions to China, India and Pakistan to promote Ontario's manufacturing sector. We also opened seven new offices in different parts of the world to attract investors and also to be able to sell our products.

When I look at the budget of March 22 this year, the McGuinty government has recognized that something had to be done in the business and manufacturing sectors. This is why we came up with this business education property tax reduction. We will spend \$540 million over the next seven years to balance this portion which was unfair. Surprisingly enough, when I looked at it—and I don't know if it's because the former Premier of Ontario in the previous government was living in the Parry Sound area—the tax on industry per \$500,000 assessment was \$47.70. And when I looked at Cornwall, for example, it was over \$21,000. But this is an area that we said we would look at, and it is part of the budget this year that we want to be fair with every single municipality in Ontario to help out the manufacturers.

1720

Another point we have taken a look at is the capital tax. We have said previously that we would eliminate the capital tax by 2012. It will be done by 2010. This year alone there will be a 5% reduction.

Also, the opposition keeps referring to the cost of electricity. I think everybody is aware—probably not the new people—that in 2002, people were paying up to 11.3 cents per kilowatt hour. I remember bank managers calling me and saying, "How can we afford to pay or to have a set budget for every month when we don't know what price we will be paying for electricity?" It's true. They came back and said, "We will freeze it at 4.3 cents a kilowatt hour." What a mistake they made. They told us they had a surplus every month. At that time, no one in Ontario or outside of Ontario wanted to invest in building a hydro generating station. They couldn't do it at 4.3 cents. Today we are managing. We are repairing what the previous government did. It is costing a lot of money.

A few weeks ago I met with a representative from the Niagara Advanced Material and Manufacturing Cluster in Welland—we know who the representative is down there—and found it encouraging to see that while the community understands there have been many job losses in manufacturing in Ontario, they are taking a positive approach and are looking for new markets for their products here in Ontario, across Canada or in any other part of the world.

By forming this cluster, they have brought together industrial leaders, municipal leaders, educational leaders and government, all focused on a common goal: to improve the economic climate for the manufacturing sector in Ontario. They have also discovered that within this manufacturing cluster in southern Ontario, they have found new markets for their products even within members of this cluster. They are now talking to one another and telling each other about the products their companies manufacture and have found that many times, another member of the cluster has a need for their product right within their own community.

They also spoke very positively about the recent business delegation with Minister Papatello in Edmonton, and a few of them indicated that they've already signed contracts. They're planning to return, now that they are aware of the opportunities that are available to them in western Canada.

They met a representative of PCL. Everybody knows who PCL is: It is the number one construction industry in Ontario—in Canada. Also, they attended this forum in Welland. He gave them a long list of manufacturing products that they need to fulfill their contracts. He stated that they need manufactured products from Ontario manufacturers to complete these contracts.

I know it is not easy. There are many job losses in the manufacturing sector in Ontario, but I would recommend that Ontario manufacturers look seriously at clusters as a way to bring prosperity back to the manufacturing sector.

Every day Minister Papatello talks to me about the importance of the manufacturing sector to Ontario's economy. By working together, we will make it a vibrant industry once again.

The McGuinty government has already come forward with a \$500-million auto investment strategy for our automotive industry. We also have been helping manufacturing businesses across the province with our AMIS program, the advanced manufacturing investment strategy. The AMIS program provides interest-free loans to support our Ontario manufacturing sector. So far, we have announced eight projects that will generate almost \$350 million in new investment. These projects will create or retain over 2,500 jobs across Ontario.

When I look at it, the McGuinty government will invest over \$6 billion in universities and colleges. This would mean that we do understand that we need additional tradespeople. By investing in colleges and universities, we will meet the requirements.

When I see the difference in electricity between Ontario and Quebec, I just look at the number of jobs lost in Quebec in the forest industry. They lost more jobs than we did in the forest industry. They lost 7,349 jobs as of April 19, 2007, and we lost 6,692 jobs. These are very good examples.

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** Last week, I watched 50 jobs disappear in downtown Hagersville as masked individuals with Mohawk warrior flags forced construction equipment off an 80-unit residential development. It only took four or five hours to



shut it down. That day I watched intimidation trump the vague and ineffectual policy of Dalton McGuinty, a policy in place for the past 15 months, since the Caledonia occupation. The Caledonia subdivision was a much larger subdivision. I can only begin to imagine how many jobs we've lost with the demise of that development. Take a look at Dunnville, Cayuga, Brantford and possibly Kitchener-Waterloo. How many jobs or potential jobs have gone down the river?

Speaking of Brantford, we are seeing a tragic outflow of manufacturing jobs, partly fuelled by this government's illegal, dishonest tax hike and job-killing economic model. I think of three companies in Brantford—

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The member has used language which is not parliamentary.

**Mr. Barrett:** I withdraw, sir.

I make mention of three specific companies in Brantford: Blue Bird, Westcast and GenFast. That's a total of over 600 jobs down the drain. In Simcoe, we're losing 167 jobs at Simcoe Leaf, and hundreds of tobacco farming positions, and another 150 jobs are gone at the tobacco board in Delhi. In Guelph, we saw 550 tobacco manufacturing jobs go up in smoke. In fact, Dalton McGuinty's member from Guelph-Wellington, Liz Sandals, celebrated that announcements by saying, "Our plan is working."

Delhi Foundry—closed. The three car dealerships in Delhi are closed. Delhi's licence bureau is now closed. TRW in Tillsonburg: Many of its employees are on notice and could be facing layoff.

Our farmers continue to be in crisis. But Dalton McGuinty's prescription is a \$191-million cut to the ag budget, coupled with a plethora of rules and regulations, paperwork and more forms to fill out.

What about Dalton McGuinty's repeated promise—the broken promise—to throw 600 people out of work at OPG Nanticoke? For the workers at Nanticoke, the past three and a half years have been life in limbo: Do you buy a new house, do you buy a new car or do you go on that vacation when Dalton McGuinty is promising to throw you out of work at any time? This is unacceptable. There has to be a better way. There has to be a comprehensive plan.

1730

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** It's a pleasure to join the debate on this motion today. We've heard from many speakers about the catastrophic job losses in this province under the McGuinty government: 137,000 since 2005. In my riding there are 135 at Smurfit, around 100 at Commonwealth Plywood, 100 at Trimag by the end of this year, and Pfizer in Arnprior is planning to shut down in 2008. I'm also concerned with the potential job losses.

As well, there have been many smaller layoffs within the forestry sector. I'm very concerned about what's going to happen in the forestry sector with this government's plan to reduce and apparently, it looks like, even-

tually shut down logging in Algonquin Park. Logging predates the park itself. For people in my riding it is the primary industry that led to the opening of Renfrew county. You've heard the stories of the great J.R. Booth and the square timber era. All of that old white pine came out of the park and the surrounding area.

There are thousands of jobs in my riding that are dependent on Algonquin Park. They are good jobs. The average job in the forestry sector in Renfrew county pays 20% more than the average wage in the county outside of the forestry industry. That applies for all of the people surrounding the park as well.

Right now we have a proposal from the Ontario Parks board that would reduce and eventually eliminate logging in Algonquin Park. That would have a devastating effect, not only on my riding but on some other, surrounding ridings as well. I hope to hear from the member for Nipissing standing up for jobs in her riding, or maybe she's been told to be quiet on this one.

This is a very, very serious issue. I unfortunately don't have time to get into all of the details today because we have other speakers for whom I have to allow some time as well. But I hope that I have some time before this House rises to articulate those points in the strongest way possible to the minister. We have a situation in Algonquin Park with logging. The job has never been done better. It has never been more productive. Why are we trying to fix something that is certainly not broke? Shelve this plan before you shut down more jobs in rural Ontario. But it seems that this government doesn't care about rural Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further débat—debate?

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** A Freudian slip, Mr. Speaker.

I'm pleased to join the debate on the resolution standing in the name of John Tory, the leader of the Ontario PC Party, in support of bringing back manufacturing jobs in Ontario. Folks in the Niagara and Hamilton areas have been, sadly, the poster child for manufacturing job losses under Dalton McGuinty's regime. Since the days of Sir James Whitney, the Conservative Premier who made investments in hydroelectric facilities in Niagara Falls through the Beck sites, Niagara and Hamilton have always had a booming manufacturing sector, a manufacturing core, since just after the turn of the century before last.

Today, in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario, because of high taxes, runaway government spending and a hydro policy that is sending manufacturing rates through the roof, we have shed jobs, unfortunately, like Dalton McGuinty sheds promises.

I look at the list in our area—Stelco in Hamilton, 700 jobs; Slater Steel, Hamilton, 360 jobs; Dana auto parts, Thorold, 537 jobs; Hamilton Specialty Bar, 360 jobs; Port Weller Dry Docks, St. Catharines, 250 jobs; GDX Automotive, Welland, 200 jobs; Blue Bird Corp., just up the road in Brantford, 130 jobs; John Deere, Welland, 63 jobs; Cadbury Schweppes, 26 jobs—to name just a few. The casinos have also shed jobs under Dalton McGuinty:



The Fort Erie Race Track, sadly, without a change in government policy, may face closure in 2008.

Certainly, it's time for the government to bring forward a real plan, to lower the tax burden on Ontario and Ontario businesses, to reduce red tape, and to have a hydro policy that's going to encourage supply as opposed to closing it down. I'm in strong support of Mr. Tory's resolution.

**Mr. John Milloy (Kitchener Centre):** It's a pleasure to participate in today's debate, but I must begin by confessing that I'm a little disappointed. Like all members in this House, we've seen what's happened in terms of manufacturing across the province. We've read about layoffs in communities in various parts of the province, and in our own communities we've had a chance to witness layoffs. Certainly we've seen it in the Waterloo region area. I've had a chance to sit with workers who've been laid off. I've had a chance to meet with company representatives. I've had a chance to look at what's happening in the manufacturing sector and express the concern that you've heard today. And the idea that we would come to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and have a mature, thoughtful debate about how we should deal with the restructuring, with the changes that are happening in the manufacturing sector, not only in Ontario but across North America and indeed the world, is something which I think has a lot of value to it.

I came here today to look for a motion that we could debate and discuss that contained in it certain elements: first, that acknowledged the fact that every single member of this Legislature is concerned. The idea that we've heard from across the way—that people on all sides of this House are not concerned with what's happening in their community, are not concerned when they meet workers who are laid off—is, in my mind, offensive. We are all concerned, and we are all looking for answers.

The second thing I would look for in a motion like this is an acknowledgment that, in the search for answers, there are no simple solutions. When one looks at what's happening in manufacturing—as I say, not only across North America but across the world—one realizes that there are changes taking place through globalization and there are changes taking place through trade patterns. One looks at all that and realizes that there are no simple answers.

I think the most apparent demonstration of the fact that there are no simple answers is what we've heard from the opposition today, which is nothing. We've heard rhetoric. We've heard, "Get a plan. Do something." From the NDP we've had, "Hire a jobs commissioner." I came in one day and decided to read Mr. Hampton's legislation to see the clues of how Mr. Hampton was going to solve it. You know what a jobs commissioner is?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Milloy:** I hear my friend Mr. Yakabuski. A jobs commissioner is a bureaucrat: "Hire a bureaucrat who's going to go out and make things right and work with manufacturers and work with workers." They're going to make things right by doing the types of negotiations, the

types of access-to-government programming which many, many qualified bureaucrats in MEDT and other ministries across the government do every day. So I have a hard time believing that we're going to find this magic jobs commissioner who's going to wave a magic wand and make everything right, because if that was the case, I can guarantee you that we would have hired 10 of them and we'd have no problem in this province. The simple fact is that there aren't simple answers because there are pressures coming at us from both within Ontario and outside of Ontario.

This leads to the third thing I would have looked for in a motion that we could have discussed with some maturity and some clarity today, and that is the role of the federal government. As I've attended meetings and rallies and town halls in my community, I've heard about problems with the rising Canadian dollar; I've heard of problems with unfair trade agreements. Yet when I read Mr. Tory's motion today, I see no mention of the federal government, no mention on the inaction that's happening in Ottawa, and no mention of the concern that I'm hearing, particularly from auto workers, about what's happening in terms of trade negotiations on the federal front.

Finally, when I look at this sort of motion, I want to see an acknowledgment of what this government has done in terms of manufacturing.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, if the members will let me speak, I could continue.

**The Acting Speaker:** I'd ask the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke to refrain from heckling the member. He had his chance.

I'll return to the member for Kitchener Centre.

1740

**Mr. Milloy:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, I'm looking for an acknowledgment of what this government has done, and maybe I can summarize what we've done in a quote. The Leader of the Opposition likes to come forward with quotes from newspapers, so I have one from the Toronto Star from Buzz Hargrove, the leader of the Canadian Auto Workers. Perhaps our members from the NDP—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Milloy:** Oh, they laugh at the Canadian Auto Workers, do they? I'm very proud of the Canadian Auto Workers in my riding and what they've done. This is what Buzz Hargrove said: "Mr. McGuinty is the only political leader in the province or in the country who understands the importance of the manufacturing sector, especially the auto industry." Why does Mr. Hargrove say that? He says that because of what we've done.

In the short term, the immediate term—and it's been highlighted by other people who have participated in this debate today—when there is a layoff, we're there right away. We're there to help laid-off workers get retrained. We're there to give them the support they need.

When it comes to the medium term, it's working with existing manufacturing companies to make them as productive and as innovative as possible. It's about



programs like AMIS and OASIS that we've heard about this afternoon: OASIS, which deals with the auto industry and which took \$500 million and leveraged \$7 billion worth of investment. Why haven't we heard about the new Toyota plant across the way? Even though it's in Woodstock, which is some miles away, it's affecting my community. People are finding jobs there. As well, we have the supply chain. In an area like Waterloo region, where we have part of the auto manufacturing supply chain, you're going to see spinoff jobs there. Why aren't people talking about new investments by Linamar in the Guelph area, which again is positively affecting my riding?

But you know what about the longer term? It's about making the most innovative, highly skilled, highly educated economy in the world, and that's what we're aiming for in Ontario. We've invested more money in post-secondary education than any government: \$6.2 billion. That money hasn't simply gone for universities. It has also gone for skilled workers; it's gone for apprenticeships.

We've also invested money in research and innovation. We've seen the Premier put himself as Minister of Research and Innovation so that Ontario can be one of the most innovative economies going forward.

We realize the world is changing. We realize there is globalization. We realize that there are new pressures inside and outside the province, and we're going to embrace them. We're going to prepare our economy for the future. We're not going to stick our heads in the sand like the people across the way.

I wanted to come here today and talk about solutions to what's happening in the manufacturing sector. Instead, from across the way, all I've heard is hollow rhetoric.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** In the brief time I have, I want to take a different tack than some of the other speakers we've heard this afternoon. I want to talk for a moment about the fact that all of these numbers, all of these statistics, all of these people, the 135,000 people across this province who have lost their jobs, are in fact not just statistics. They are real people. These are people whose families are going to suffer. These are people whose communities are going to suffer. I think that's something that needs to be emphasized.

I can give you one very simple example of the kind of spillover effect this has. I'm acquainted with a person in Thunder Bay who was laid off. His wife has her own business, but within a very brief time she began to see that those purse strings were being tightened by the various people, like her husband, whose jobs had disappeared, so she could see that her job was then in jeopardy. It's that kind of real-life example that we need to know. We need to understand that it's 135,000 people across this province, and the multiplier effect that that has should surely cause the government great concern.

The last speaker referred to the fact that he was disappointed that the official opposition wasn't doing the job of government, quite frankly, and coming up with solutions. Let me just pose the question about a govern-

ment that's done nothing about an energy policy, that has only sent out confusion and contradictory remarks in terms of developing plans for an energy policy, whether the coal-fired plants are being closed or are being re-invested in. There's the question of nuclear power, the experiments in alternative energy. These are all things that are designed, quite frankly, to give business a great deal of concern over a stable energy source.

The regulatory burden is another area. We've seen it multiply significantly in the past three years. There's taxation, but I think most important is the infrastructure deficit of this government. Without roads, without proper infrastructure, business cannot thrive.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I'm proud to enter into the debate in the limited time. There are a couple of issues I want to point out.

One of the members opposite asked, "Well, where are your ideas?" We've introduced a couple of bills. One was to eliminate the fuel consumption tax. That would substantially help the auto sector. That would mean anywhere up to \$7,000 or \$8,000 per vehicle. It's about \$50 million income. That will have a big impact on the sales.

One of the others was the notification for goods sold in the province of Ontario, at least in the auto sector, so that individuals and consumers had the choice to realize that "This vehicle was produced 85% in Ontario; this vehicle, only 15% in Ontario." It was a way to notify the consumer and give them more choice in what was taking place.

Some of the other aspects that have been brought forward: the taxation on ethanol. It's had a huge impact as a disincentive for the E-85 being produced in Oshawa to be sold in Canada, which is very costly. It could be an incentive to promote the E-85 as a vehicle of choice in the province and in Canada, but now it's a disincentive with the taxation. I was opposed to that.

Some of the others: We now have, or we've always had, just-in-time delivery service. With the cost of fuel, though, companies are now trying to relocate closer so that they reduce their fuel costs and their transportation costs. Why not come forward with relocation proposals for these companies so that they can relocate to reduce that just-in-time delivery cost?

We talked about the colleges and universities, but one of the significant areas that's not being addressed by the government or anybody at this particular time is the skilled trades. There is a huge number of individuals in the skilled trades required in all sectors, and they are not being filled. We need some major incentives in the skilled trades areas to deal with this particular issue.

We've spoken about a couple of other things, such as the disincentives or the non-trade tariffs. For example, in Korea, insurance for a non-domestic vehicle is far more expensive than for a domestically made vehicle, which is a disincentive to purchase ours. We have to eliminate those or, as a matter of fact, maybe create some in Ontario so that we can compete with those other countries.

In closing, I just want to ask: If you are willing to purchase goods produced at a substantially reduced wage, when are you going to be willing to accept those wages they are produced at?

**The Acting Speaker:** The time available for debate on this motion has now expired.

Mr. Tory has moved opposition day motion number 5. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1748 to 1758.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr. Tory has moved notice of motion number 5. All those in favour of the motion will please rise.

#### Ayes

Barrett, Toby  
Bisson, Gilles  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Ferreira, Paul  
Horwath, Andrea

MacLeod, Lisa  
Martiniuk, Gerry  
Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia  
Murdoch, Bill  
O'Toole, John

Savoline, Joyce  
Scott, Laurie  
Sterling, Norman W.  
Tascona, Joseph N.  
Tory, John  
Wilson, Jim

Hudak, Tim  
Klees, Frank

Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Runciman, Robert W.

Witmer, Elizabeth  
Yakubski, John

**The Acting Speaker:** All those opposed to the motion will please rise.

#### Nays

Arthurs, Wayne  
Bradley, James J.  
Brownell, Jim  
Bryant, Michael  
Caplan, David  
Chambers, Mary Anne V.  
Chan, Michael  
Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob  
Dombrowsky, Leona  
Duguid, Brad  
Fonseca, Peter  
Gerretsen, John  
Gravelle, Michael

Hoy, Pat  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Kular, Kuldip  
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Zimmer, David

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):**  
The ayes are 24; the nays are 41.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.  
This House stands adjourned until 6:45 p.m., later on this evening.

*The House adjourned at 1801.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

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Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.



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of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature



**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 29 May 2007**

**Mardi 29 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
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Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 29 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 29 mai 2007

*The House met at 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PROVINCIAL ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 SUR L'INTERVENANT PROVINCIAL EN FAVEUR DES ENFANTS ET DES JEUNES

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 17, 2007, on the motion for third reading of Bill 165, An Act to establish and provide for the office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth / Projet de loi 165, Loi visant à créer la charge d'intervenant provincial en faveur des enfants et des jeunes et à y pourvoir.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean–Carleton):** It's my pleasure to join the debate today on Bill 165, the independent child advocate, as the Progressive Conservative Party's critic for children and youth services. At the outset I'd like to say that my speech will not take the entire one-hour leadoff. Because I believe so strongly in this piece of legislation, I am going to make the relevant points. I am therefore pleased to announce to the chamber that my party, the Progressive Conservative Party, under the leadership of John Tory, will be supporting this legislation.

I would like to begin by thanking my colleague from Kitchener–Waterloo, our deputy leader, for contributing to the debate for 20 minutes. I'd also like to thank the countless advocates who spoke to myself, the minister and the critic from the third party on this piece of legislation. I'd like to single out a few at this time. I would like to single out Les Horne, Ontario's first child advocate. I'd like to focus right now the attention on Judy Finlay, who is in the government gallery, who is Ontario's chief advocate and who, when this bill passes tomorrow, will be the independent chief advocate for all children in the province of Ontario. Judy, we're very proud of you, and I want to thank you.

I would like to thank Defence for Children International, under the leadership of Matthew Geigen-Miller and Agnes Samler, and in addition Cathy Vine and all of the good people at Voices for Children. Their voices, coupled with the dozens we heard at committee, strength-

ened this bill and helped move it forward. I think what we see before us is a vast improvement from the first reading of the bill.

I'd also like to thank at this time the Minister of Children and Youth Services as well as my colleague from the third party the member from Hamilton East. All three of us worked together. We checked our party sweaters at the door, we took politics outside of the debate and we worked instead for the children of this province.

At first reading, I promised that we would consult, we would study and we would move forward on this bill. At second reading, I reiterated our commitment and I told the Legislature that we were here to work in good faith. Today, we are here to tell the Ontario people that the Progressive Conservative Party supports this piece of legislation. We got two amendments to this bill that we are particularly proud of, the first being the positive right of entry for the independent child advocate, which was not seen at the first reading debate. But after working very hard at clause-by-clause hearings and sending this bill to third reading and then back again to committee, we're very pleased that that has been included.

I'm also very proud to have been the one to introduce a motion to allow the independent child advocate to appoint deputies. I think that's very important, because as you know, I come from an eastern Ontario riding, in the city of Ottawa, and we had heard from children across Ontario—from northern Ontario, from eastern Ontario, from my city and other isolated communities throughout this province—who said they needed a connection but it needed to be a local connection. Today, because of our work in committee and our work with all three political parties, that is there.

I am not going to take much more time, because I believe in the bill as it sits, but I want to say three things for the record, three things I think could have been improved in this piece of legislation. One is that I felt very strongly that a children's bill of rights needed to be incorporated in the bill. It is my intention to continue work on the children's bill of rights in the province of Ontario, because I believe children, like my little girl, Victoria, and all the children in our daycares and throughout the rest of our province in children's aid societies and other organizations, need our support.

I also have concerns with the fact that we didn't put in a provision that would ask members of the independent child advocate staff to refrain from being members of the public service union. I spoke about that at committee.



Unfortunately, that did not pass, but I would like it on the record today that I cautioned against that.

Finally, one of the amendments I did support, and introduced myself at committee on several occasions, was to provide at least the ability for the independent child advocate to appoint an advisory committee or at least empower her to have a role similar to the IMPAC committee, the interministerial committee that was created by Premier Davis in 1977 to reach out through government departments to better serve our children and our youth across ministerial departments, to break down the silos of government that sometimes crop up even though it's not in the best interests of the children.

I just noticed two of my good friends here, Agnes Samler and Les Horne, whom I mentioned earlier as I began this speech. I want to recognize their wonderful contribution, not only to this piece of legislation but to the children of this province. I think they've done a tremendous job. This Legislature and the people owe you great gratitude and thanks.

Again, these were the three issues that I felt needed to be addressed in the bill, yet weren't, but I did let you know that I support this bill, my party supports this bill, and we are very pleased to be on record with that today.

I apologize, Mr. Speaker. I was just given something here, very quickly. I just want to reiterate our support, but I also wanted to say that we have taken our cue from Les Horne, our first child advocate, who has just joined us. He was also appointed by former PC Premier Bill Davis, who is one of my heroes. He told the justice committee, "I realized that if we don't get this legislation through, it may never get through. That's the great fear behind all of us who care about what's happening here. It really has to be done. We've been pressing on this for such a long time. Therefore, anything which would delay that would break my heart.... But I agree with you. The most exciting moments in my life are times when kids have taken over." Obviously, I take this very seriously because he said it with such heart.

So as we establish this piece of legislation and the children's chief advocate for Ontario, as I mentioned, we

will have a transitional advocate in the form of Judy Finlay, and we're all very proud of that. Judy Finlay, as you may know, takes thousands of calls each year, and from her work and through the work of stakeholders in the sector and the loyalty from the children and youth we've seen—and I guess they're with her here tonight—if it's any indication, I must say that as a province we are very fortunate to have Judy Finlay, a woman as passionate as she is, running this operation. I know she feels so passionately about children's rights that maybe in the future I'll be able to call on her as I move forward on my appeal for a children's bill of rights.

At this point in time I feel so strongly, with Les Horne, that we need no further delay. I'd like to just again reiterate our support. I look forward to voting for this tomorrow and thank the people who have made this bill possible. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you very much. Questions and comments? Further debate?

Mrs. Chambers has moved third reading of Bill 165.

Is it the pleasure of the House that motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

I have received a deferral note from the chief government whip, and this vote will take place tomorrow during the time of deferred votes.

Orders of the day.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

*The House adjourned at 1855.*

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Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

## Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

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## Journal des débats (Hansard)

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Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
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Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

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Wednesday 30 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 30 mai 2007

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### MEMBER FOR NIPISSING

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** What is the member from Nipissing saying that has North Bay councillors so riled up? The May 29 edition of the North Bay Nugget reads, "Council Lashes Out at MPP; Won't 'Tolerate' Misleading Statements." The article goes on to explain that city councillors let loose a stream of criticisms against the Nipissing MPP demanding a public retraction of what is referred to as "false information" in the member's latest newsletter. Mayor Vic Fedeli was quoted as saying, "We won't stand by any longer without correcting these misleading statements. This is an election year and this council will not tolerate her continued false statements and will now publicly challenge every one that's made." Municipal council is obviously very disturbed with the member's claim that an additional \$1.175 million in provincial funding was provided to the city this year—funding that the city claims is actually federal dollars announced by Ottawa in 2006 that simply flows through the province.

This is the most recent blow-up in a lengthy battle between councillors and the member from Nipissing. North Bay councillors are frustrated with continually having to set the record straight when it comes to funding. The member does not mention that the funds are federal dollars, provoking harsh words from North Bay councillors who describe the newsletter as "irresponsible" and "propaganda." The member from Nipissing not surprisingly responded to local disapproval by completely denying any falsehood, despite admitting that the funding was in fact previously announced federal dollars. Well, in the words of Mayor Fedeli, the member from Nipissing "simply doesn't get it."

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Traditionally, in this place we don't use some of the language that was quoted. I understand that even if you quote it, it's still not an appropriate thing to do in this House in order to say certain things that would normally not be allowed to be said, and I would ask if there's a situation that happened just now, as to whether or not it should be withdrawn.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I was listening carefully also. I was concerned with the language.

The member from Parry Sound–Muskoka would know that you cannot do indirectly what you can't do directly, and I'm sure that he will withdraw the offending word.

**Mr. Miller:** Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to withdraw the offending word that was in the North Bay Nugget.

**The Speaker:** Maybe you could just withdraw.

**Mr. Miller:** I'm happy to just withdraw.

### ASPER FOUNDATION PROGRAM

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot):** "First they came for the Communists, but I was not a Communist, so I did not speak out. Then they came for the socialists, and the trade unionists, but I was neither, so I did not speak out. Then they came for the Jews, but I was not a Jew, so I did not speak out. And when they came for me, there was no one left to speak out for me."

I was privileged, along with many other community leaders, to on Sunday evening attend the Asper Foundation human rights and Holocaust studies graduation program at Temple Anshe Sholom, where 57 Hamilton high school students in a cross-cultural program stood to pledge to envision a world without racism and imagine a world without hate. I want to say thanks to the UJA Federation of Hamilton, to the Asper Foundation, and to Madeleine Levy, the inspirational chair of this exciting studies program.

It's important that our young people learn about the atrocities of the past and also the importance of standing up for human rights. When I watched the 57 people on Sunday evening, I looked out at them and I knew they were the very best reason for hope that our world knows.

### NATIVE LAND DISPUTE

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** Dalton McGuinty went to court to legalize the land occupation at Caledonia, and now school safety is in jeopardy.

In the most recent editions of the Turtle Island News and the Tekawennake native weeklies, we read about an AK-47 assault rifle beside Caledonia's Notre Dame School. I'll quote the Turtle Island News: "The incident began with an exchange at the land reclamation site near the Thistlemoor Street entrance early Thursday afternoon during which VanEvery threatened another man in his late twenties with an AK-47 rifle." The Thistlemoor barricade is right beside Notre Dame School. Just minutes away, from provincial Highway 6, the AK-47 was let loose. And I'll quote the Tekawennake: "The



bullet entered his upper arm at the biceps tearing a seven-inch exit wound in the back of his arm, but missed the bone and the ... artery."

The Tekawennake also indicates the AK-47 was previously seen near the school, and I quote: "[T]he shooter did somehow manage to bring the weapon onto the site undetected by site security who were busy dealing with another incident at the time." A further quote: "[T]he incident caused great concern in Caledonia and especially among parents of students at Notre Dame School which abuts the reclamation site."

An AK-47 assault rifle right beside an elementary school in Caledonia: Will Dalton McGuinty deal with this or cover it up?

#### CHAMINADE COLLEGE SCHOOL

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South-Weston):** I rise today to salute the fine young men, their parents and the staff at Chaminade College School in my riding for their accomplishments and enormous successes.

This past Saturday, I joined the Chaminade community for their eighth annual duck race and sixth annual stocking of brown trout into Black Creek. This terrific event draws not just Chaminade students, parents and staff, but also local residents and business owners who work tirelessly to clean the creek and rehabilitate it to a pristine state where native fish species can once again become abundant. The initiative started as a small idea put forward by the school's then-fledgling environment club, led by Bob Giza, a model educator. Since then, it has been integrated into the curriculum and has received numerous accolades, including more than \$66,000 in public and private grants.

As perhaps the greatest symbol of success, graduates of the program have gone on to pursue studies in environmental conservation and are already making invaluable contributions in the field.

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However, this isn't the only good news emanating from Chaminade. On Monday, I was back at the school to watch the award-winning concert band, under the passionate guidance of Alex Voros, receive a \$10,000 grant from MusiCan, the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences' music education program. The money will be used to ensure that the powerful sounds of music continue to fill the halls of Chaminade.

The students were thrilled to be joined by Billy Talent, the Juno Award-winning band, whose members talked about the start of their own musical journey to raucous applause.

To principal Mike Wallace and everyone else at Chaminade, well done and rock on.

#### PRIX DU PATRIMOINE ROGER-BERNARD

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** Je désire aujourd'hui partager avec vous ma grande fierté

quant au Prix du patrimoine Roger-Bernard, décerné cette année au Comité paroissial du patrimoine de Rockland et au Conseil municipal de la cité Clarence-Rockland pour les efforts qui ont mené à la désignation patrimoniale de l'église Très-Sainte-Trinité de Rockland et de son presbytère.

Ce prix, remis annuellement à une personne ou à une organisation qui contribue à la mise en valeur du patrimoine, constitue la plus haute distinction dans le secteur patrimonial de l'Ontario français. La désignation de l'église et du presbytère de ma paroisse a permis de faire reconnaître la valeur historique d'une des très belles églises paroissiales de l'Ontario français et d'un magnifique presbytère-château, érigés entre 1917 et 1920.

Le comité responsable de cette désignation est composé de Louis Aubry, Gilles Chartrand et Fernand Tittley, ainsi que M. le Curé Jean-François Morin. Je les félicite tous de leur travail ardu dans cet important projet.

L'église Très-Sainte-Trinité de Rockland et sa maison paroissiale ont une importance qui dépasse largement l'histoire locale ou régionale. Ces deux bâtiments, qui font partie du paysage du cœur de Rockland, sont considérés comme des joyaux du patrimoine religieux franco-ontarien et ils sont, pour les paroissiennes et les paroissiens, des éléments de fierté et d'appartenance.

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The last presenter did run over his time a little bit. I know that I was cut off at my—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Your time was done. Sit down.

#### PREMIER'S RECORD

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** Today at Queen's Park we witnessed the oddest pairing since Arnold Schwarzenegger appeared with Danny DeVito in the movie *Twins*. On one side of the stage we had the Governorator and on the other side of the stage we had the Taxinator.

Hollywood Dalton is certainly familiar with the Hollywood lifestyle, jet-setting to exotic locales from the Toronto airport, going all the way to Hamilton and to St. Catharines on taxpayers' dollars—in fact, \$1 million spent on private plane services since taking office.

Our Premier is certainly not afraid to spend like a Hollywood celebrity either. Two million dollars were spent on chartered flights and luxury hotels on a trip to India for himself and an entourage of 40 people; \$837 to ship ice from Toronto to Niagara-on-the-Lake for a ministers' meeting; and a hotel bill, totalling \$16,000 for himself and 15 other staff, which was \$1,000 per person.

Mr. Schwarzenegger once played the Batman villain Mr. Freeze. I remember that Mr. McGuinty promised to freeze taxes, but that promise thawed just a few short weeks into his term in office, and the Taxinator imposed a \$4.4-billion tax hike.

Mr. Schwarzenegger once starred in *The Running Man*. We have our own running man, Dalton McGuinty, running from any responsibility to address the ongoing 15-month occupation in Caledonia.

We look forward to saying *hasta la vista* to Mr. McGuinty.

### BYTOWN MUSEUM

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** As the world increasingly learns of the beauty and the impressive achievements of the Rideau Canal, celebrating its 175th anniversary this year, it should pause for a moment to note another gem perched on the banks of the Rideau River, the Bytown Museum.

The Bytown Museum represents the best of heritage preservation in Ottawa. It is in the heart of our city and at the heart of our history. For generations, the Bytown Museum has educated the nation on the special story of the founding and the early growth of Canada's unlikely capital. Opened in 1917 by the Women's Canadian Historical Society of Ottawa, the Bytown Museum celebrated its 90th anniversary this year.

Newly renovated, the museum explores Ottawa's past from the mid-1820s, when Bytown was founded, until the end of the First World War. Visitors can expect to learn about the construction of the Rideau Canal, Ottawa's role as a lumber boom town and the assassination of Father of Confederation Thomas D'Arcy McGee.

Thanks to funding from all levels of government, the Bytown Museum now includes many features that will appeal to families and students, from a 3D animation of the Rideau Canal to audio clips of important moments from the First World War. The museum has also installed a play space where children can try on costumes, play Victorian games and truly get their hands into history.

Finally, permit me to add my personal congratulations to Christina Tessier and her team for their heartfelt devotion to projecting onto the present, as well as the future, the images of past generations of Ottawans and valley folk who toiled, dreamed and dared to bring forth the modern joy that we today call Ottawa and that Canadians appreciate so much today.

### GAINEY FOUNDATION

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I rise to speak about the Gainey Foundation. I have a personal interest in the creation of this very worthwhile foundation after having attended school with Cathy Gainey and knowing her family, who still live in my riding of Peterborough. My father-in-law, Bob McGarrity, taught Bob Gainey in Immaculate Conception Elementary School in Peterborough. We watched in horror the events of last year that surrounded Laura Gainey's death. Everyone was touched by the tragedy.

Out of bad comes good: Bob Gainey's strength during this time of overwhelming tragedy is an example to us all. The creation of the Gainey Foundation, announced on May 2, 2007, will honour Cathy and Laura Gainey's love for the arts, environment and education. The foundation will offer financial support to community-based charitable organizations that reflect the interests and commitments of Cathy and Laura Gainey's lives.

It is an honour for me to stand today and acknowledge this family and, in particular, Mr. Bob Gainey and the creation of the Gainey Foundation.

### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I rise in the House today to speak about the McGuinty government's commitment to creating an environment of prosperity.

What the leader of the official opposition fails to understand is that you just can't cut taxes and keep your fingers crossed that the economy will grow better on its own. We saw the devastating consequences of that approach from the member's own party. We are investing in the building blocks for a sustainable and prosperous society.

We have invested \$3.5 billion in our schools to date. For the first time in 16 years, students applying to post-secondary institutions have never experienced lost learning days due to labour action in our schools. We are creating a highly skilled workforce through our \$6.2-billion Reaching Higher plan for post-secondary education and through our investment in skills training programs. We have a comprehensive advanced manufacturing investment strategy that has generated \$370 million in new investments and anchored 3,000 high-value jobs.

The previous government left Ontario with a deficit of \$5.5 billion that they hid from us and denied existed. They were also unable to attract a single new auto plant in the previous eight years. Unlike the members opposite, the McGuinty government Liberals have a plan for Ontario and will continue to move forward with real results now and in the future.

### VISITORS

**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I would like to welcome two wonderful people from Hamilton representing Habitat for Humanity: Sylvia Galli, director of fundraising, and Linda Barry, director of marketing. These people were the lucky bidders on an auction to have lunch at Queen's Park. So welcome today; we are happy to have you.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** On a similar point of order, Mr. Speaker: Justin Stevenson is a page from the riding of Essex. With us today in the members' east gallery are mom and dad, Kim and Stewart Stevenson, sister Jacqueline and cousin Danielle Gloss, all from the Cottam area.

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### ANNUAL REPORT, INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table the 2006 annual report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario.



## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

## FAIR ACCESS TO VOTE ACT, 2007

LOI DE 2007 SUR L'ACCÈS ÉQUITABLE AU  
SCRUTIN

Mr. Hudak moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 231, An Act to provide fair access to vote for snowbirds, students, military personnel and other Ontarians abroad / Projet de loi 231, Loi visant à offrir un accès équitable au scrutin aux retraités migrants, aux étudiants, au personnel militaire et aux autres Ontariens et Ontariennes qui sont à l'étranger.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie—Lincoln):** Surprisingly, Ontario is the only province that does not allow a mail-in ballot during provincial election campaigns. All the other provinces and territories, all 50 states in the USA, as well as Mexico allow a mail-in ballot.

Seniors fought in the war to help preserve our democratic rights. They built this province and made it strong. It is only appropriate that if they are taking some well-deserved time outside Ontario, they would have a chance to vote.

I wanted to thank, in the gallery today, Jerry Brissenden, president of the Canadian Snowbird Association; his wife, Joan Brissenden; and the director of research and communications, Mike "Macko" MacKenzie, who helped do research on this bill.

## MOTIONS

## HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** I move that, notwithstanding any other order of the House, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 30, 2007, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bentley has moved government notice of motion number 366. Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1353 to 1358.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Members please take their seats. Order.

All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

## Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Gerretsen, John	Pupatello, Sandra
Balkissoon, Bas	Gravelle, Michael	Qadri, Shafiq
Bartolucci, Rick	Hoy, Pat	Ramal, Khalil
Bentley, Christopher	Kular, Kuldip	Ramsay, David
Bradley, James J.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Rinaldi, Lou
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Ruprecht, Tony
Cansfield, Donna H.	Levac, Dave	Sandals, Liz
Chan, Michael	Marsales, Judy	Smith, Monique
Colle, Mike	Mauro, Bill	Smitherman, George
Crozier, Bruce	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Di Cocco, Caroline	Parsons, Ernie	Watson, Jim
Dombrowsky, Leona	Patten, Richard	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duguid, Brad	Peters, Steve	
Duncan, Dwight	Phillips, Gerry	

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

## Nays

Amott, Ted	Hudak, Tim	Miller, Norm
Barrett, Toby	Klees, Frank	Savoline, Joyce
Chudleigh, Ted	MacLeod, Lisa	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Martiniuk, Gerry	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 43; the nays are 11.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSESSMOKE-FREE ONTARIO  
UN ONTARIO SANS FUMÉE

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** I rise in the House today to bring to the attention of all members that tomorrow marks the first anniversary of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, which came into effect May 31, 2006.

This legislation marked the culmination of decades of work by committed volunteers and organizations who dedicated themselves to raising awareness of the dangers related to second-hand smoke. The Smoke-Free Ontario Act is a landmark piece of legislation that has made Ontario's enclosed public places and enclosed workplaces 100% smoke-free and placed restriction on the promotion and display of tobacco products.

Every year, tobacco claims 16,000 lives in the province of Ontario. That's 44 people every day, or almost one life every 30 minutes. These statistics are tragic when you consider that tobacco use is the number one preventable cause of death in Ontario.

Smoking also burdens the province and its citizens economically. Tobacco-related diseases cost the Ontario economy \$1.6 billion in health care annually, which results in \$4.4 billion in productivity losses and at least 500,000 hospital days each year.

Compte tenu de ce bilan, la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée a constitué une loi vraiment essentielle. Elle

s'inscrit dans le cadre de nos efforts plus ambitieux consistant à réduire la consommation.

Il est tout à fait indiqué que nous célébrions l'anniversaire de cette loi le jour même où l'Organisation mondiale de la santé marque la Journée mondiale sans tabac sur le thème « Des espaces sans tabac ».

It is fitting that we celebrate the anniversary of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act on the same day that the World Health Organization has declared World No Tobacco Day, on May 31, with this year's theme of smoke-free environments.

A year ago tomorrow, on the front lawns of the Legislature, I was joined by my colleague George Smitherman when we marked a turning point in this province's drive towards a smoke-free Ontario. Our partners, our volunteers, schoolchildren and youth, long-time advocates, government officials and legislators all joined together on this incredible day of change in Ontario.

Sadly, one of the driving forces behind the Smoke-Free Ontario Act was not at our side when the legislation came into effect. Our dear friend Heather Crowe, as many of you know, passed away on May 22, 2006, of lung cancer. Heather never smoked a day in her life. Her courageous battle to educate people about the dangers of second-hand smoke inspired this government to take action. We all owe her a tremendous debt. I'm reminded of that each time we recognize the leadership and the efforts of our health partners, such as a public health unit with the award that was created in Heather's honour. If only Heather could be with us and continue to see the progress being made.

Yesterday, I had the pleasure of renaming the Ministry of Health Promotion boardroom as the Heather Crowe boardroom, a small gesture to remind us all of this great tobacco-free hero.

When we ran for office in 2003, we made a promise to Ontario to reduce tobacco consumption by 20% and make all workplaces and public places smoke-free. The latest figures indicate that Ontario tobacco consumption has fallen by 18.7%, or more than 2.6 billion cigarettes, since 2003.

Le ministère de la Promotion de la santé et les 36 bureaux de santé publique dans la province, qui sont responsables de l'exécution de la loi, ont adopté une approche graduelle pour appliquer la loi, approche qui est concluante.

Because of you, one year after the act became law we are seeing real results. Let me share with you some of the statistics:

—In 2005, 67% of students in grades 7 to 12 had never taken a puff of a cigarette. That is a 10% reduction since 2003.

—The number of students in grades 7 to 12 who say they have smoked is the lowest since 1977.

—Restaurants and bars have had a 99.9% compliance rate with the prohibition on indoor smoking, according to the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit.

—As of March 31, there have been only 2,838 charges laid across the province. In a province of close to 13 million people, that is quite remarkable. Those charges

include selling to minors, as well as smoking in an enclosed public workplace.

A 99.9% compliance rate: Congratulations to the public, restaurateurs and bar owners. Because the bars, restaurants, hotels and a host of workplaces, and smokers themselves, have made the adjustment, there is virtually 100% compliance with the law's requirements for smoke-free environments.

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** How about those smoking palaces—

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** Mr. Speaker, the member from Renfrew continuously interrupts. I know he does not support the Smoke-Free Ontario Act but—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Watson:** —I know the people in his riding were disappointed when I handed his public health unit the Heather Crowe Award.

Since 2003, this government has increased its investment in tobacco control sixfold, to a total of \$60 million. Such investment is critical to the success of the entire smoke-free Ontario strategy, of which the Smoke-Free Ontario Act is the centrepiece. We know that the Smoke-Free Ontario Act goes a long way to making Ontario a healthier place to live, work and raise a family. But it is only one part of our strategy, which is among the toughest and most comprehensive tobacco control strategies in North America.

En collaboration étroite avec toute une série de partenaires, nous avons mis en œuvre une stratégie qui repose sur trois piliers :

—empêcher les jeunes de commencer à fumer;

—protéger tout le monde des effets nocifs du tabagisme passif; et

—aider les fumeurs qui veulent arrêter de fumer à réaliser leur objectif.

Our prevention strategy for youth involved an \$8.8-million investment in 2006-07 to support such initiatives as the youth action alliances, the Lungs are for Life school curriculum and our award-winning stupid.ca campaign.

We have also helped Ontarians quit through a \$10-million investment in cessation programs in 2006-07, such as:

—the Canadian Cancer Society's Driven to Quit Challenge; Smokers' Helpline, which is 1-877-513-5333; and Smokers' Helpline Online. On April 30, 2007, the Canadian Cancer Society and the Ministry of Health Promotion presented the 2007 Driven to Quit Challenge grand prizewinner with a brand new Acura CSX. Just before Krista Dwyer of Windsor drove away in her new car, she said, "After 20 years of smoking, I realized it was time to make my health a priority. After a number of unsuccessful attempts to quit smoking last year, I'm thrilled I was finally able to do it. I'm in my last year of nursing school and understand the need to set the right example as a health care professional."

Other cessation programs include the Leave the Pack Behind program, which reached 390,000 full-time students in 32 Ontario universities and colleges; and groundbreaking research on the optimal distribution



methods for nicotine replacement therapy carried out by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

It was my pleasure to announce at the today's Smoke-Free Ontario reception across the street at Hart House that this government is increasing help available to smokers who want to quit and may be in need of additional assistance accessing cessation services. It was announced today that the McGuinty government is providing free nicotine replacement therapy and cessation support via the 54 community health centres, like Pinecrest-Queensway community health centre and Carlington community health centre and many others across the province, and the 10 aboriginal health access centres.

Our task is not yet complete on many fronts. On May 31, 2008, the final phase of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act will take effect with the complete ban of the display of so-called tobacco product power walls.

In closing, I'd like to thank all of our partners, be they individuals, non-government organizations or private businesses, for the contribution they have made to the success of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

1410

#### GO TRANSIT

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Transportation):** I rise in the House today to tell you about our government's investment in GO Transit. Since we took office nearly four years ago, our government has invested \$1.8 billion in GO Transit to benefit the riders of the greater Toronto area and Hamilton, including \$457 million this year alone.

Exactly one week ago today was GO Transit's 40th anniversary, and it's been 40 years of phenomenal growth. It's hard to imagine that GO Transit started in 1967 as an experiment, with a single train running along a short stretch of Lake Ontario. As soon as the first trains began soaring across the tracks, they were filled with people looking for an alternative to the car.

In its first year, GO carried 2.5 million passengers, and its success hasn't stopped since. Today, GO Transit operates seven train lines and a bus system that covers more than 2,200 kilometres. It carries over 48 million passengers a year on a system of trains and buses that connect with each other and regional transit right across the greater Toronto area and Hamilton. GO has become one of the greatest transit system success stories in North America. Its triumphs have exceeded the wildest dreams of anyone who was involved in its creation, and there's more growth ahead.

Better service for Mississauga residents is only a few months away, as this fall we will open the new Lisgar station. It will be the first new GO station to be built in Mississauga in 25 years. We're working with the federal government and greater Toronto area municipalities on a \$1-billion infrastructure improvement plan that will see many new kilometres of track built on the Lakeshore and Georgetown lines, and hopefully, by the end of this year, GO rail service will be restored to Barrie, Ontario.

We are also constructing underpasses and overpasses so that GO train commuters will not be delayed by freight traffic on the Georgetown, Bradford and Stouffville lines, and we cannot forget about the heart of the GO expansive network: Union Station. GO Transit has also embarked on an extensive renewal program for Union Station and the tracks approaching the historic station. The improvements will double the station's capacity to more than 80 million passengers per year and will improve train operations and reduce operating costs.

We are making improvements to Union Station so that commuters can get around easily. We have opened a new platform and added new stairways to reduce bottlenecks and make it easier for riders to get to the GO concourse, transit connections and street-level walkways. The historic train shed roof, one of only two of its kind in Canada, will be rehabilitated, providing a cleaner, brighter platform area. A modernized signal system will improve reliability and allow trains to move quickly in and out of the station. More efficient use of trains means a better system for riders.

Mr. Howard was the first CEO of GO, and he indicated at the anniversary party that he didn't think they'd reach one million riders. This year they celebrated their one billionth rider. These improvements will also allow GO to expand routes, increase service and keep pace with the growth within the greater Toronto area and in Hamilton.

Our investments have provided GO riders with access to four new train stations: East Gwillimbury, Mount Pleasant, Kennedy and the relocated Milliken station. We have opened a new bus terminal at Square One in Mississauga and at McMaster University in Hamilton—and it's heated. We have also purchased 70 new bi-level rail cars, which carry seven million more passengers per year; 27 more powerful and fuel-efficient locomotives; and 144 new accessible buses and 12 double-decker buses. We've added 500 new bus trips per day and 6,000 new parking spaces right across the system.

Those investments are paying off. GO Transit ridership has increased by about 10%, from 44.3 million to 48.7 million, in the last three years. That's 4.4 million more passengers a year. Total GO Transit ridership in fiscal 2007-08 is expected to be around 51 million, and that means an average of more than 1.4 million fewer car trips each year in and around the greater Toronto area. Getting more people out of their cars and onto public transit means we're all breathing cleaner air, burning less fuel and reducing gridlock.

Improving public transit is a vital part of this government's plan to create a more sustainable transportation system, and we've taken steps with the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority. The GTTA will build a seamless transportation system and a network that will go across the GTA and Hamilton. We now know that we've made a difference in how we can provide service to the people who are commuting, not only in and out but right across the whole area. We've given riders convenience as well with the introduction of a new fare card.

I'm proud to say that our commitment to public transit is making a huge difference to the people of Ontario.

### INJURED WORKERS' DAY

**Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour):** I'm privileged to rise in recognition of injured workers in the province of Ontario. Friday is Injured Workers' Day in the province, and on that day I will address a rally here at Queen's Park. The rally is being organized by the Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups, and I would encourage all members from all sides to join us there.

It's sad that this group has to exist because people have been killed or injured on the job. It should sadden all of us.

This day is a memorial to those who have been injured or killed on the job simply because they went to work. This should not happen. Every single workplace injury is preventable, and every member in this Legislature knows that to be true. There should be no excuse for a workplace injury or death.

Unfortunately, though, not everyone understands this. Regrettably, there are those who take workplace health and safety too lightly. Our government is committed to reducing the occurrence of workplace injuries. Nevertheless, workers continue to be injured; workers continue to be killed.

A month ago, our government presented its fourth budget. This budget is more than just numbers on a page, because this is the fourth part of our plan to invest in people and expand opportunities in Ontario to create new economic strength. These are the foundations of a successful, caring and compassionate society. We're investing in children, families, seniors and our most vulnerable.

One of the most significant steps we've taken as a result of that budget has been to address one of our most vulnerable groups: injured workers. Our government is committed to creating a brighter future for injured workers. One of the things we clearly understood is that when a worker is injured, it affects not only his or her working life but it affects family life. It can affect the ability to exercise and enjoy recreational activities. It affects social life and it affects self-worth.

While we may not be able to undo the injury that has been done, we can make life a little easier financially. And that's what we have done. On July 1, injured workers who are not 100% disabled will receive a 2.5% increase in benefits. That's being followed by another 2.5% increase on January 1, 2008, and another on January 1, 2009.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Mr. Peters:** I hear the NDP heckling on the other side. I think it's incumbent on us to remember who sent our injured workers on a downward spiral in the province. It was the NDP in 1994 that created the Friedland formula. Don't ever forget that.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock.

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. The member for Lanark-Carleton is attempting to raise a point of order.

The member for Lanark-Carleton.

**Mr. Sterling:** The Minister of Labour's most recent remarks are not contained in the statement given to the opposition. This is not a debate; this is about ministers' statements.

**The Speaker:** As members would know, the government does circulate copies of statements by the ministry to the appropriate critics in the opposition parties. It is incumbent upon ministers to stick to the remarks that are made in the—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Just wait. It's incumbent upon ministers to read the statement as presented to the opposition. Having said that, it is impossible for the Speaker to know that because the Speaker does not have a copy of the statements. I also would caution members that heckling is sometimes responded to.

Minister?

1420

**Hon. Mr. Peters:** Speaker, I apologize. Next time I'll make sure that I stay to the script and I will make sure that I include who introduced the Friedland formula.

Our government has done more to help injured workers, some of whom have not seen any meaningful increases in benefits in 12 years. I'm proud of that. We have listened to injured workers and their call for changes, and we are delivering.

One of our first steps as a government was to undertake an independent audit of the WSIB. Recommendations were made and significant changes were implemented to stabilize the WSIB. It was an essential step in moving forward to make improvements to benefits for injured workers. Because we're taking a fiscally responsible approach, it gives us an opportunity to regularly address the needs of injured workers.

As a result of the proposed changes in the budget, indexing increases in WSIB benefits for partially disabled workers would no longer require changes to the legislation that was created by the Friedland formula.

Further to those legislative changes, there is the addition of \$810,000 a year in ongoing funding for the Office of the Worker Adviser. This is in addition to funding that will allow the agency to improve and expand services to injured workers and their survivors. The Office of the Worker Adviser educates, advises and represents non-union workers on workplace safety and insurance matters.

I want to thank a number of groups: Bright Lights, Women of Inspiration, Injured Workers' Consultants, Thunder Bay and District Injured Workers Support Group and the Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups.

These proposed changes represent the commitment of our government to assist and help vulnerable workers in



this province, some of the most vulnerable being injured workers.

If there is one more thing that we can all do for workers it is that we can prevent them from being injured in the first place.

We have committed to an impressive goal of reducing lost-time injuries to our workers by 20% over four years. We committed to hiring an additional 200 health and safety inspectors. We've done that. We have introduced a powerful new intervention strategy to deal with employers who are not doing what they must to care for the health and safety of their workers. We are committed to reducing those lost-time injuries by 20%, and I'm proud to say that we are succeeding.

Every one of us needs to work together. We need to change attitudes. We need to change behaviours. Every workplace injury, every workplace death can be prevented. When I meet with injured workers, I am inspired and saddened at the same time. I am aware and in awe of their courage and resilience but I am saddened that they are injured; it didn't have to happen. I think we all need to do what we can to reduce workplace injuries.

#### VISITORS

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to introduce the students from Queensway Christian College and their teacher Joni Allardyce, sitting up in the gallery.

Also sitting in the gallery today is my daughter Sarah Witmer.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I can't top having a child in the House, but I do want to introduce very good constituents of mine, Mr. Bob McConkey and his son Sean, who is a former page, to visit their daughter and sister. Sean has thrown the gauntlet down and said he's absolutely sure he can be a better page than she is. I think there's some sibling rivalry here.

#### SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses? The member for Lanark–Carleton.

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** As you know, in 1985 I introduced the first bill to control smoking in the workplace and public places in Canada, let alone in the province of Ontario. Therefore, I am very much against smoking—this terrible addiction—and we celebrate each cessation of that habit. We also celebrate the life and contribution of Heather Crowe, who worked and grew up in the same area where I was raised.

But let us remember back to when this bill was before this Legislature. Let us remember that during the hearings on this bill, the minister responsible, who has spoken, refused to provide funding or accommodation to our seniors in nursing homes. Let us remember this past winter, when many thousands of seniors were forced out into the freezing cold in order to have a smoke because they were addicted to this terrible nicotine. Lastly, let us

remember senior Murray Miles Patterson, who froze to death in Gore Bay, on Manitoulin Island, in part due to this government's insensitive approach to this problem.

#### GO TRANSIT

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington):** I too want to offer my congratulations to GO Transit, to the dedication, professionalism and expertise of many staff, dating from 40 years ago to the present, and to the board members who knew to park their politics at the door and provide good service for the people of Ontario.

This service began in 1967. It was the prior Progressive Conservative government that had a vision for good public transit and invested in that public transit. The stats speak for themselves: 2.5 million people in its first year, rising to 51 million people a year riding transit in 2007-08.

Ridership, of course, is in and around the greater Toronto area at this point in time. In my riding of Burlington, people depend hugely on GO Transit. They use it to commute back and forth to work in the morning and to home at night. As we move forward in the next 40 years and we plan for GO to expand, it will still remain the best, the safest and the most economical commuter rail transit system in North America.

I want to thank the staff and the board members for their continued dedication. These people know that we have a jewel in public transit here in the Toronto area, a transit system that I feel should be kept on the right track.

#### INJURED WORKERS' DAY

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** John Tory and all members of the Progressive Conservative caucus join with the many workers in remembrance of the victims who are unnecessarily injured or killed on the job in Ontario.

Yesterday, I met with Steve Mahoney, chair of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. There was no doubt in our minds that there is no such thing as an accident on the job. Too many workers have been injured or killed during the course of their employment. Every one of those injuries or deaths was preventable. We must do better.

I extend our condolences and sympathy to all injured workers, their families and the families of the deceased.

#### VISITOR

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today one of the newest members of the John Tory team, the nominated candidate for Prince Edward–Hastings, Eric DenOuden.

#### INJURED WORKERS' DAY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** It's my pleasure to respond to the Minister of Labour in terms of

the rally that's happening here on Friday, being put together by the Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups. I have to start by saying how much New Democrats appreciate the work that the network does in communities across this province. I've had the pleasure of working with my own network of injured workers in Hamilton. They do some great work and are constantly pushing government to make sure that injured workers' issues are not forgotten.

I have to say, notwithstanding the fact that the minister is quite proud of the work that's been done, I have documentation of concerns that injured workers still have. They don't understand, and neither do I, why the government couldn't simply have indexed in some way the compensation rates. That's what injured workers have been calling for year after year, and they're not doing it. They need to have increases just based on inflation. What's wrong with putting together a system where those injured workers have their benefits indexed to inflation so that their ability to make ends meet is not eroded year after year? That's what they've asked for. That's not what this government delivered. Instead, the government delivered a little bit of something that will get them over the election and maybe into the next year or so. But the injured workers are saying loud and clear that they don't want to have to keep coming, cap in hand, to government to get increases to their pensions, and that's something that this government has failed miserably on.

1430

Members of this Legislature need to know as well that injured workers are really concerned about other pieces that this government refuses to look at. I'm talking about things like time limits on appeals, things like universal coverage. We are ashamed to know that 30% of workers in this province are not even covered by workers' compensation. That's something that your board chair, whom you are so proudly applauding, agrees with publicly: that we need to get all workers covered under the workers' compensation system in the province of Ontario.

Another issue is the experience rating system, which members will know is not working. It's a system that is basically bonusing employers for good health and safety records, but it really is just a management claims issue. Employers are not fully reporting accidents and injuries in the workplace, and this is causing significant problems for workers who are injured on the job.

There is so much more that this government needs to do for injured workers, but my other colleagues have to have some time to speak.

#### GO TRANSIT

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** There's clearly tremendous frustration and anger in the GTA about the lack of sustainable transportation, about the lack of a functioning transit system that we—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Tabuns:** Speaker? Fine.

In any event, today there was an announcement about the 40th anniversary of GO Transit.

Last year, this government went through an exercise in passing legislation to create something called the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority, which was supposed to be a centralizing body that would set forward regional transportation plans and deal with gridlock. Well, the simple reality—and that came through yesterday as well—is that this new GTTA board has simply been left out in the cold, been left out to dry, because they haven't been told how the government is going to spend its money, they haven't been consulted on HOV lanes, they haven't been consulted on the very framework within which they are supposed to operate, and, quite rightly, they are irritated.

So one has to ask on this celebration of the 40th anniversary of GO Transit, was the GTTA simply set up as a new, nice, fancy package essentially for GO Transit to continue on as always? Will GO Transit have the money it needs to deal with transit problems in the GTA? We don't see that. We see packed trains, we see late trains, and we see a government that is not covering the funding for expansion of the system, and that has left it with municipalities. It's no wonder that people in this region are angry about transit.

#### SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** I want to respond to the Minister of Health Promotion.

New Democrats, of course, recognize the incredible contribution of Heather Crowe, and we recognize that much more needs to be done to stop smoking in Ontario. But I want to remind the government of their own inconsistency on this measure. When it became apparent that stopping smoking was going to affect the government's own revenues at its casinos, what did the government do? They changed the law to provide smoking at casinos. They chose—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Order.

On a point of order, the member for Ottawa–Orléans.

#### VISITEUR

**M. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans):** J'aimerais introduire un entrepreneur d'Orléans : M. Jean Hébert est ici à Queen's Park. Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

#### DEFERRED VOTES

PROVINCIAL ADVOCATE FOR  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACT, 2007

LOI DE 2007 SUR L'INTERVENANT  
PROVINCIAL EN FAVEUR DES ENFANTS  
ET DES JEUNES

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 165, An Act to establish and provide for the office of the



Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth / Projet de loi 165, Loi visant à créer la charge d'intervenant provincial en faveur des enfants et des jeunes et à y pourvoir.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1435 to 1440.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Ferreira, Paul	Patten, Richard
Arthurs, Wayne	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Peters, Steve
Balkissoon, Bas	Fonseca, Peter	Phillips, Gerry
Barrett, Toby	Gerretsen, John	Prue, Michael
Bartolucci, Rick	Gravelle, Michael	Pupatello, Sandra
Bentley, Christopher	Hardeman, Ernie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bountrogianni, Marie	Horwath, Andrea	Ramali, Khalil
Bradley, James J.	Hoy, Pat	Ramsay, David
Broten, Laurel C.	Hudak, Tim	Rinaldi, Lou
Brownell, Jim	Klees, Frank	Runciman, Robert W.
Bryant, Michael	Kular, Kuldip	Ruprecht, Tony
Cansfield, Donna H.	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Caplan, David	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Savoline, Joyce
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Leal, Jeff	Scott, Laurie
Chan, Michael	Levac, Dave	Sergio, Mario
Chudleigh, Ted	MacLeod, Lisa	Smith, Monique
Colle, Mike	Marchese, Rosario	Smitherman, George
Crozier, Bruce	Marsales, Judy	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Martiniuk, Gerry	Takhar, Harinder S.
Di Cocco, Caroline	Mauro, Bill	Van Bommel, Maria
DiNovo, Cheri	McMeekin, Ted	Watson, Jim
Dombrowsky, Leona	McNeely, Phil	Witmer, Elizabeth
Duguid, Brad	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duncan, Dwight	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John
Dunlop, Garfield	Munro, Julia	Zimmer, David
Elliott, Christine	Oraziotti, David	

**The Speaker:** Those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 77; the nays are 0.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

#### VISITORS

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would ask the members of the assembly to welcome to the assembly the grade 8 students from Deer Park Public School in Keswick. They're accompanied by their teacher, David Weir, and by Mary Watson and Leanne Straeche. Welcome.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### COAL-FIRED GENERATING STATIONS

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** My question is for the Minister of Energy. Today the Premier had the Governor of California in town to try to pump up his environmental image. While the Governor has given up acting, it is clear that the Premier—

#### Interjections.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** We're going to start over. I need to be able to hear the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. Other interventions are really not necessary.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. Today the Premier had the Governor of California in town to try to pump up his environmental image. While the Governor has clearly given up acting, the Premier has clearly embraced it.

The only action we've seen from the McGuinty government on climate change over the past four years is a promise broken again and again to close the coal-fired power plants, all the while dismissing the need to reduce smog-causing emissions from those coal plants.

In 2002, the Premier said that dirty air causes 1,900 premature deaths, 13,000 emergency room visits, and costs \$1.1 billion in health care costs and lost work days each year. He said that he wouldn't stand idly by, but that's exactly what he's done.

My question for the minister is this: If he cared about reducing smog-emitting pollutants from the coal plants, he'd follow our lead and embrace technology that already exists that can all but eliminate those pollutants from the coal plants. Why won't you install that equipment in the coal plants, Minister?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy):** We won't spend \$1.5 billion for unproven technology that's installed anywhere that would force you to keep the plants open for 40 years. That's not the right approach. I will remind the member opposite that the CO<sub>2</sub> also contributes to climate change and it contributes to smog.

#### Interjection.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** It does contribute to smog, with due respect. These technologies don't get CO<sub>2</sub>; they don't get mercury; they don't get particulate. They won't be up and running until after we've closed the plants.

Final point: I remind the member opposite that under his government and his party, coal emissions went up 127%; under our government and our party, they're down 32%, a record that's unmatched anywhere in North America.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Well, more emissions from the minister. But the simple fact is this: There is one member of this House who actually did close a coal plant, and that's the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, when she ordered Lakeview closed. All that this government has done is attend photo ops. They are far more interested in cutting ribbons than they are in cutting emissions.

My question is this: If they are serious about climate change and reducing smog-causing emissions, why have they taken no action over the past four years? Why have you wasted four years and allowed coal plants to continue spewing pollutants that could be dealt with under current technology—not new technology; current technology. Why have you sat back and done nothing while we continue to get smog day after smog day after smog day?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** The question was devoid of fact. First of all, nitrous oxide is down; sulphur oxide is down; CO<sub>2</sub> is down; mercury is down. Under them, it was up.

I do remember the member opposite closing something in Ontario. It wasn't a coal plant, because the work hadn't been done; the wires hadn't been run. That member did close 28 hospitals.

What we have is a party that's endorsing coal-fired generation well into the future. We say no to you, we say no to Mr. Tory, and we say, "Hasta la vista, coal plants." That's what this government's about.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Final supplementary?

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Energy: The one thing I can tell you that is up is the hot air coming from that minister. The reality is that we are the only government thus far that has signed a regulation to close a coal plant. All you've been is hot air, no action—talk, talk, talk.

We have a plan; John Tory has a plan: He's going to reduce emissions to 10% below 1990 levels by 2020 and 60% by 2050. He has a made-in-Ontario plan. We have seen nothing but hot air and talk from you and your government for four years. That's the difference between John Tory and Dalton McGuinty. Our leader is a leader who will do what he says he's going to do and not break his promises.

I ask you, why did you squander four years in office? Why did you —

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Minister?  
1450

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** Well, I'm glad they'll reduce the emissions from coal plants to 10% below 1990 levels, because we've done that—with respect, job done. When we came to office, that regulation that they propagated left everything undone: no wires to close the plant; no replacement generation—we had just had a blackout; no green power. Your energy minister of the day said, "We don't need conservation."

We've gone from last to first in green power. We have windmills, bioenergy, every type of alternative source coming on stream in Ontario—the largest solar farm in the world coming in under this Premier and this government.

Mr. Tory is about more coal, about dirtier-fired power. They won't do the green power that we've done. They reject conservation. The people of Ontario rejected them in 2003; they'll reject them again in 2007, because they have no plans—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

#### SCHOOL SAFETY

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Minister of Education. A week ago, Jordan Manners was killed in a senseless act of violence in one of our schools. It's a crime that shocked us all, and today, parents, teachers and students alike try to come to grips

with that terrible event. Now we're hearing stories from current as well as former teachers at C.W. Jefferys high that that school is rife with concerns about student as well as teacher safety.

My question to the minister is simply this: Has the Premier, in light of these revelations, asked her to investigate the circumstances at this high school and deliver a full report on those circumstances with recommendations to rectify what is happening there?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** I obviously take the whole situation extremely seriously. I was able to go to the visitation last night and speak with some members of the family, and it is a dreadful situation.

On the issue of the situation in the school, I spoke with the director of education of the Toronto District School Board this morning, and I know that the Toronto board is looking at the circumstances in the school. The important thing is that if the allegations are true, and I have no way of knowing specifically whether they are or not, then there are school climate issues that need to be addressed and there obviously needs to be, in every school in our province, an opportunity for teachers to talk about issues so that they can solve problems at the local level. The director of the school board is looking at the situation currently.

**Mr. Klees:** That's a disheartening response, for the Minister of Education to stand in her place and confirm that, in light of what we've all read—reports from teachers, both current as well as past—the best she can do is to talk to someone at the school board and see what's going to happen and if the allegations are true.

We are calling on the Minister of Education, without any further delay, to order an investigation that will deal not with platitudes, but will give her and in fact this House a comprehensive report on the circumstances in that school. Will she agree to order that investigation, not subject it to the school board?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** Here's the thing: There is a police investigation going on. I have talked to the director of education of this board. It is the director's responsibility to make sure she knows what's going on in her schools.

The member opposite doesn't have a clue how public education works. The member opposite and the leader of his party may be in the throes of some kind of epiphany around public education, but they are the people who stripped the system, they are the people who removed resources, and the gall of this member to stand up now and tell me how to deal with public education is beyond imagining.

We are responding to a complex problem with a complex response. The system is looking at what is going on in their schools. That is their responsibility, and we're providing the resources for them to do that.

**Mr. Klees:** What a pitiful response. In response to a question triggered by the death of a student, this Minister of Education can do nothing but hurl partisan barbs across the way. Shame on her.

Here is why I'm asking her to take action: Because a teacher is saying that the school board has failed, that the



administration has failed, that teachers have failed. If all of those levels in our education system have failed in this school—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Member for Oak Ridges.

**Mr. Klees:** These are not my words. These are the words of a teacher who was there, who said that the school board has—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, I will not warn you again.

Member for Oak Ridges.

**Mr. Klees:** Sandra Fusco has said that we have all failed. She included herself as a teacher, she pointed to the administration, and I would say that if this minister does not take action, we in here have failed as well. I'm asking her to take the initiative and show leadership: Order an investigation and make sure that the appropriate steps are taken to clean this act up.

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** Here's what I've done: I called the director of education this morning and I expressed my concerns. It is her responsibility, and I have faith in the director of education and in the teachers in our schools.

The teachers in our schools know that the members opposite have no confidence in them. They know that. They sat there for eight years, and every morning they would open the newspaper to see how they were going to be vilified. I am in conversation with the board of education on providing summer programs for students. There are complex responses needed to these issues. The member opposite and the Leader of the Opposition sat by idly for eight years while our system was stripped. They define "johnny-come-lately" with their compassion.

## MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Deputy Premier. Almost 175,000 good-paying manufacturing jobs have been lost under the McGuinty government since August 2004. That represents almost 20% of the total manufacturing jobs in Ontario lost in less than three years under the McGuinty government. New Democrats have put forward a number of positive suggestions that would help to save and sustain manufacturing jobs in this province, but the McGuinty government has rejected virtually every one of them. My question is this: As the loss of manufacturing jobs continues and worsens, where is the McGuinty government's plan to save and sustain manufacturing jobs and to sustain the pensions of hard-working Ontarians who are losing their jobs?

1500

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** The Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for**

**women's issues):** I'm very pleased to stand with the workers of this province and work with them and corporate Ontario to bring investment to Ontario. I find it very interesting, having been in the House with this particular member for a few years now. I remember the days that the gallery would be filled with union leaders and he would be quoting the union leaders right here in the House.

Unfortunately, the times have changed for him, because I'm going to quote a union leader now: "Dalton McGuinty is the only one who understands the automotive sector." Who said that? That was the CAW leader Buzz Hargrove. We were proud, even this past Sunday, to walk with Buzz in Windsor in support of manufacturing jobs in Windsor. Where was Howard, in fact? He was around the corner, but he wasn't walking with the workers in Windsor on Sunday.

So I ask the leader of this third party: Where are you when we have tabled measures to help the manufacturing sector? You have been on the No side every time.

**Mr. Hampton:** What workers across Ontario want to see is a plan and not more hot air from the McGuinty government. The reality is, Ontario's working families need a government that will put working families first, because the McGuinty government has refused to act: refused to establish an office of the jobs commissioner; refused to reduce sky-high hydro rates that are killing jobs, especially in the forest and steel sectors; refused to toughen the Employment Standards Act so that Ontario would not be one of the jurisdictions where it's cheap, quick and easy to lay off workers and shut down plants.

Today, the Workers' Action Centre put forward this plan with a number of suggestions on how workers in this province could be helped. My question: Is the McGuinty government going to reject the suggestions in this plan as well?

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** I do have to suggest that when I became the minister this past fall, I did look at what this third party leader was advancing in the notion of a jobs commissioner. We contacted the people in British Columbia. We also know that they cancelled that position in BC because they saw that it was too far removed from government to be effective. Our conversation was that, in fact, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade works directly with the companies; it is not an arm's-length agency, as the one that this member is advancing. We did look. Having been in opposition, I actually value the fact that a minister might consider an idea that comes from opposition.

You are tabling information today that I am very happy to look at, because the record of this government is clear. We have come forward to partner with the manufacturing sector and find every way. Despite a crushing high-dollar value, despite the fact that there is global influence in our manufacturing today, we are working with the manufacturing sector—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** The McGuinty government and the minister refer to the Liberal government in British



Columbia that cut the office of the jobs commissioner after that office had sustained and saved 75,000 out of 100,000 jobs that were at risk of being destroyed. They say this is an improvement.

Minister, here's one of the suggestions from the Workers' Action Centre. It's to establish an employee wage protection fund. But guess what? The McGuinty government has already rejected that. New Democrats put forward a private member's bill to ensure that when a plant is closed, at least the vacation pay, at least the severance pay, at least the unpaid wages that were owed, would be covered. The McGuinty government rejected that.

So my question is this: How does the McGuinty government explain to the 175,000 working families who have lost their jobs that it's okay that they can't get their pension covered, it's okay if they lose—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Minister?

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** I would like to put on record the ministers on this side of the House who have written, called, spoken and met with federal ministers after Bill C-55 was passed in the federal House and has yet to become proclaimed as law. I would ask the member opposite: Have you talked to your colleague in Ottawa, Mr. Layton? Has he once brought up this issue of better protection for workers? We have, on this side of the House. We will table the letters for you to see. Perhaps you'd like that as a version of a letter you could also forward.

We're doing our level best in the face of major global change. We have come forward with programs the likes of which Ontario has never seen. The reality is that your jobs commissioner proposal didn't work in BC. In fact, Ontario has a far better method of direct access to companies that may need our help.

We are looking feverishly for every new, good idea for us to partner with and we're prepared to accept any—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

## CONSERVATION

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question again is to the Deputy Premier, but it's interesting that, as 175,000 jobs disappear, what's the real answer of the McGuinty government? "Blame somebody else."

The Premier has been only too happy to meet with the Governor of California. We know that California is a leader in meeting its target of reducing waste going to landfills by 50%. They met that target in September 2006. Dalton McGuinty promised to reach a 60% reduction target. Last year, New Democrats put forward a freedom of information request, and not only has the McGuinty government failed to reach the target but—what a surprise—we found out there isn't even a plan to reach the target.

Can the Deputy Premier tell us: Why did the Premier break his promise to reach 60% waste reduction? Why isn't there even a plan?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** To the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I'm so very pleased to have a chance to remind the leader of the third party what steps we as a government have taken to move our province from the dark ages under the former government, where municipalities planned in a mode of crisis. We are very proud to have negotiated an agreement with all municipalities that sent their waste to the United States and to have a concrete agreement in place to allow them to plan, year over year, to understand, to work with our neighbours to the south, so that we can plan waste management in a way that is not lurching from crisis to crisis, as was the history under the former Conservative government, which did absolutely nothing to move this province forward in a way to protect the environment.

**Mr. Hampton:** Here is the reality: The Republican Governor of California is flexing his environmental muscles. And what do we get from the McGuinty government on waste diversion? No waste diversion; not even a plan.

Deputy Premier, California has also been a leader in energy efficiency and energy conservation. Instead of wasting money and effort on expensive, unreliable and environmentally risky nuclear power plants, California invested aggressively in energy efficiency. The result: California has curbed electricity consumption while, in Ontario, electricity consumption continues to accelerate under Dalton McGuinty.

My question is this: When will the McGuinty government start investing aggressively in energy efficiency rather than putting \$40 billion into a mega nuclear scheme?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** The Minister of Energy is anxious to respond to this question.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy):** Let's start with energy conservation: \$2 billion in investment, five province-wide programs, 490 programs administered by LDCs throughout Ontario. I would remind the leader of the third party that when he was given the opportunity to do conservation, when he had the chance, they cancelled all conservation programs.

1510

In terms of energy efficiency, Ontario meets or exceeds California in virtually every standard, and I suspect that's one of the reasons why Governor Schwarzenegger was proud to sign the deal that our Premier, Premier McGuinty, signed today. There is no government in North America that is more aggressively pursuing energy efficiency, more aggressive in pursuing energy conservation and, yes, more successful in dealing with the energy challenge and ensuring we have a cleaner, greener, reliable supply of electricity—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** The McGuinty government puts forward a strategy for \$40 billion in nuclear plants and



conducts superficial advertising campaigns about energy efficiency and calls that progress. I call it superficial photo ops.

California is also ahead of the McGuinty government in something else. California pioneered community-right-to-know legislation to crack down on toxins in our homes and in our communities. The Governor of California is a staunch supporter. How about Dalton McGuinty? The McGuinty Liberals refused to support a NDP bill, which leading environmental and public health groups want passed, to provide community-right-to-know legislation in Ontario.

My question: Why isn't the Premier willing to follow California's lead and support people's right of access to information in this province? Why is the Premier happy to pose for photo ops—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Minister of Energy?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** To the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** Our Premier stood side by side with Governor Schwarzenegger today because those are two leaders, in the biggest jurisdiction in the US and the largest province in Canada, who are going to move us forward to protect our planet. Frankly, we need both of those leaders arm in arm, working collectively.

I answered this question yesterday in the House, and let me tell you, we've paid close attention to the private member's bill. We've attended the hearings and participated. But we will say over and over again that labelling products is the responsibility of the federal government. That's why Minister Phillips and I are pushing Minister Clement to take his responsibility and label those products.

At the same time, we are aggressively reducing the air pollutants and the other contaminants that Ontarians breathe in each and every day, and we are making great progress. That's why Governor Schwarzenegger was here today.

#### CHILD CARE

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean—Carleton):** My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Recent articles in the Toronto Star and across this province have proved that there was a lapse in accountability and transparency in her department in the last two years and, further, that her ministry knew almost two years ago that children were being abused at some provincially licensed daycares. For two years, her ministry had the documentation, and for two years ministry officials ignored freedom of information legislation and withheld information for no good reason—two years, when the ministry had a maximum of 90 days to respond.

Will the minister stand here today and offer to request the privacy commissioner to undertake a full audit into the freedom of information practices of her ministry?

**Hon. Mary Anne V. Chambers (Minister of Children and Youth Services):** Actually, the privacy

commissioner has issued her 2006 year-end report, and I'm pleased to say that the Ministry of Children and Youth Services has been reported to be in compliance at the 95.5% level, which is pretty good. It is, in fact, a very significant improvement over 2005, where the compliance level of my ministry was 84.3%. We will continue to work towards 100%, but certainly the commissioner's own report speaks very favourably of my ministry's compliance with FIPPA.

**Ms. MacLeod:** The minister can try to explain that to the parents who couldn't get access to information and to the reporters who had to go through a number of appeals to try to lessen the charges that they had to give for their information requests, and the time that they took.

The Toronto Star's articles on abuses occurring in Ontario's daycares made it crystal clear that the Minister of Children and Youth Services was aware of the abuses in certain daycares—this despite the challenges that reporters faced while trying to access information that should have been made public from the beginning. She has been aware for almost two years, yet only after the media revealed the abuses and embarrassed that government into acting did she even decide to begin to act on transparency and accountability.

Now that the cat's out of the bag, I'm going to ask her one more time: Will the minister bring in the privacy commissioner to undertake a full audit of her ministry's freedom of information practices, and furthermore, once it's complete, will she make it public?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** I've actually been receiving very positive feedback on the steps that my ministry is taking to ensure that parents have access to the kind of information they need on child care centres, because we share a commitment to ensuring the health and safety of children in our child care centres.

I would like to provide parents with a telephone number which they can call to report concerns or complaints to my ministry or to request information on what has been transpiring at their particular centre. The number is 1-866-821-7770.

Within a few months, or sooner if possible, we will also have a website online which will detail serious occurrences associated with every licensed child care centre in this province, because the health and well-being of our children is absolutely—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** This is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Before the last election, the McGuinty Liberals said this: "We are committing \$300 million new provincial dollars to increase the affordability and quality of childhood education and care in Ontario."

Yesterday, the Minister of Children and Youth Services admitted to breaking this promise and forcing Ontario parents and families to choose between risky child care on one hand and no spaces at all on the other hand. What's more, the minister refused to put federal money for child care into regulated, not-for-profit care,

even though for-profit care centres have far worse safety records in this province.

My question is this: Hard-working families need to know, and they need to know today, when is the minister going to put the money where it belongs: in regulated, not-for-profit child care for all Ontario children?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** I'm going to take the liberty of ignoring the incorrect information that the member from Hamilton East presented in her question. I think it's really unacceptable that she should be so creative.

Let me respond to the matter of for-profit and not-for-profit child care. At this point in time, more than 78% of licensed child care centres in Ontario are not-for-profit centres, and approximately 21% are for-profit centres. Those statistics have not changed since our government has taken office, in spite of the fact that we added almost 15,000 new spaces last year. That is also given the fact that the federal government—and the NDP never spoke up when those agreements were at risk. They never spoke up.

**Ms. Horwath:** The minister forgets to include the fact that they would not take for-profit child care centres off of the docket in terms of their Best Start plan. That's the fact that she won't admit to.

Nonetheless, the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario called the McGuinty government's lack of quality, non-profit child care in Ontario a disgrace.

The minister tries to shift the blame, as she just did, to the federal government, but when the McGuinty Liberals promised \$300 million of new provincial money, they also promised, at the same time, to spend all federal child care money on actual child care.

Again, I quote: "We will also prioritize spending from the federal ECD funding on child care as well as partner with the federal government on a national child care strategy to spend those specific federal dollars on regulated, centre-based care."

Didn't anyone ever tell the minister that two wrongs don't make a right? When will this minister release the federal money that has been withheld for so long—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Minister?

**Hon. Mrs. Chambers:** We lost a federal-provincial agreement that basically deprived Ontario families of \$1.4 billion. But in spite of that, we created almost 15,000 new child care spaces last year, and our government has committed to sustain every single one of those spaces. That record is a far cry from the NDP record, where they closed child care spaces. In fact, we know the demand for spaces is well beyond even what we have been able to do so far. But they closed spaces. We have created almost 15,000 new spaces.

## STUDENT LITERACY COMPÉTENCES LINGUISTIQUES CHEZ LES ÉLÈVES

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** My question is for the Minister of Education.

Today, the Education Quality and Accountability Office released the results of the 2006-07 Ontario secondary school literacy test. The test, administered to more than 146,000 grade 10 students this past March, measured whether students are meeting the minimum standards for literacy.

The McGuinty government has focused on helping all students improve their literacy skills. We created the literacy secretariat to support student achievement in schools across the province. We have provided funding for 6,800 more teachers in our schools, and we have invested more than \$3.5 billion in the education system.

Minister, the OSSLT is an important tool that teachers and schools use to help support students. Can you—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question's been asked. Minister of Education?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** We have raised student achievement to record levels, and we've held that progress. It's a very good good-news story. We've got more ESL students, more special-needs students, more girls and more francophones succeeding this year than were succeeding five years ago. We're at an 84% achievement rate. That's a very high rate. We've got almost 25,000 more students succeeding this year than five years ago.

Female students: 12,772 more girls succeeded than in 2002. We've got 1,000 more ESL students achieving, 4,500 more special-needs students have been successful this year than in 2002, and about 14,000 more students who are taking academic English reached the standard this year. In applied English, the rate of increase has been even more dramatic, at 24% more students. That's 11,000 more students since 2002. It's a very good good-news story for students in the province.

**Mr. Lalonde:** It's remarkable how much these test scores have improved since the McGuinty government took office in 2003. We have more ESL learners, more students with special needs and more students in applied-level courses succeeding at the literacy test. More students are also finding success through the Ontario secondary school literacy course. It is clear that your efforts to support students are working.

Notre gouvernement veut voir de bons résultats pour tous les élèves. Bien que ces résultats démontrent que les élèves de l'Ontario ont maintenu leur excellent niveau de succès, il y a encore du travail à faire pour assurer le succès académique de tous les élèves.

Minister, how will you continue to support our students' achievements?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** The test scores are one way of looking at the student success that we've experienced. But what's really important is that we've got more students graduating from high school: 6,000 more students a year are getting their secondary school diplomas, and that is because of programs we've put in place: our high-skills major, dual credits, more co-op programs. What that means is that more 16- and 17-year-olds are choosing to continue to stay in school and to go on to apprenticeship or to college or university.



That's what's really critical about these results, and that's because we've put student success teachers in schools. We've got more than 1,900 since we came to office in 2003. We've put \$25 million more into special education just this year, \$10 million for the aboriginal grant and \$7.5 million just this year for English as a second language. Every year we've been making those investments to help capture the kids who are struggling. They are succeeding. That's what the test results demonstrate.

### NATIVE LAND CLAIMS

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** To the minister of aboriginal affairs: Minister, you bought Douglas Creek Estates, the occupied land at Caledonia. You paid \$15.8 million, plus \$1.1 million in compensation, \$5.8 million for other builders—\$22.7 million all told. This does set a precedent. My question is, will you be buying other lands threatened with seizure? Will you be compensating other builders who have been intimidated with respect to their plans for development?

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I'd like to inform the member—as I'm sure he is aware—that since November we've been working on a protocol for the future development of the Haldimand tract. We think it's very important that we reach some certainty and some predictability as to how growth and prosperity can accrue in that particular area. We've been working very hard to try to get that. We're not there at this time. These situations should be solved at the negotiating table, and we're determined to do that.

**Mr. Barrett:** You mentioned November. It has been 15 months, and we need to know whether Dalton McGuinty has a plan for native land seizures. Is he making this up as he goes along? Is the historic Haldimand tract, by any stretch of the imagination, a safe bet for development?

We know that Dalton McGuinty paid \$22.7 million at Caledonia. Last week in Hagersville, at the former Northview School, a developer, having invested \$2 million, was intimidated and was walking away from that site. The question is, what is the plan? It has been 15 months. Is there any compensation in order? Is there any thought to purchase this land? What about businesses in Hagersville? What about homeowners?

A precedent was set. Where are we now? What's the plan, after 15 months?

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** Where we are today is that we are working with Six Nations and Haudenosaunee to develop a protocol for development in the Haldimand tract. I agree with the member: We need predictability going forward. That's very important. This is a high-growth area. It's part of the growth plan, and developments need to proceed. We need to see these communities prosper. So we're working at the side table and the main table on this issue, and I would hope soon we'd have progress on this.

### WORKPLACE SAFETY

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. I have here over 100 letters from various electrical contractors across the province. These particular letters speak to a move by your ministry that allows air conditioning mechanics to perform work that is normally done by certified and trained electricians. Allowing air conditioning mechanics to do this type of work that they're not certified for can lead to a safety issue as far as injury and possibly death. I have a very simple question to you: Are you prepared today in this House to say that you will not allow that work to be hived off to an unskilled trade?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** I thank the member for raising the issue. As he knows, the type of work that he's speaking of—and for those who may not be familiar, we're talking about residential air conditioning systems installed by a compulsory trade. The only issue is whether they are allowed to connect that system up to the panel—that's all we're talking about—work that has been done by members of that compulsory trade for decades.

We were asked by the Electrical Safety Authority to take a look at the issue. The first question is: Is there a safety issue? And if anybody has evidence of non-safety, give it to the Ministry of Labour, my ministry and the ESA. We discussed with both compulsory trades, the electricians and the HVAC trade, and we've gotten to the position now where they agree on a compromise for commercial systems. In residential systems, what the air conditioning trade will be able to do is simply connect up the system to the existing electrical panel—what they've been doing for decades.

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**Mr. Bisson:** I have in the gallery today Dan Racicot, who is one of the contractors out of Timmins who represents literally hundreds of contractors across this province.

I know something of this issue. I'm a certified electrician by trade and I can tell you it's not as simple as just running a wire from an air conditioning unit and bringing it into a panel. There are a number of things that you've got to take into consideration, and those are issues that you're trained for. You serve a 9,000-hour apprenticeship. You go to trade school in order to learn your trade for two reasons: one, that you can do it well, but two, that you do it safely and you never put the public at harm.

I ask you again. This is an unsafe move. We're asking you to say no and to not allow this particular part of the trade to be hived off to workers who are not trained or qualified to do the work, which can lead to a very unsafe condition.

**Hon. Mr. Bentley:** Again, you have two compulsory trades. To be fair, not only are the electricians serving an apprenticeship of many thousands of hours and taking the required course, but the residential air conditioning



mechanics are serving an apprenticeship of many thousands of hours and taking the connection issue in their course. The Electrical Safety Authority, when we asked, did not have any safety issues. The two provincial advisory committees at first agreed and then disagreed on the approach.

I say to the member that if there is evidence of a safety issue, I, the Minister of Labour, and the ESA, the Electrical Safety Authority, want to know first. But there has to be evidence because, frankly, this work has been done for decades, and the contractors would know that.

### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** My question is to the Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship. Small and medium-size enterprises make up 99% of Ontario businesses and account for more than 50% of the jobs in Ontario. In May 2006, Premier McGuinty created Ontario's first ever ministry dedicated to small business and entrepreneurs.

Across the province, including my riding of Northumberland, there are many hard-working small business owners who contribute so much to our local communities but who, by unlocking this creative potential, contribute to innovation, investment and job creation in every part of the province.

Over the past year, we have been conducting outreach while visiting small business owners and organizations. Minister, can you please share with us what Ontario small businesses have identified as a top priority?

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship):** First of all, I want to thank the member from Northumberland for asking the question, but I also want to thank him for his advocacy on behalf of small and medium-size businesses.

My ministry was created about a year ago. After that, I had the chance to go and visit and meet with a lot of business people in this whole province. My colleague from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, who is the chair of the Small Business Agency of Ontario, also did the outreach meetings. During these meetings it became very evident that there were three or four issues that were really bothering the business community. One was paperwork, because they were spending a terrible amount of time filling out government forms. The second was that they wanted easy and good access to information from the government ministries. The third issue was that they want to make sure that they have the ability to sell to the government as small businesses.

They also raised issues in regard to—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Mr. Rinaldi:** Minister, small businesses give back to their local communities and make us stronger in so many ways. Ontario's small business sector is a principal contributor to innovation, investment and job creation in every part of the province. This important community makes up to 99% of Ontario's businesses and accounts for more than 50% of Ontario jobs. It is important that

our government makes every effort to take proactive steps in supporting these sectors and provide the kind of vibrant business environment that encourages success, prosperity and job creation, and we are delivering on these commitments.

Minister, as reducing the paper burden has been identified as a top issue among Ontario's small business community, can you please tell us what your ministry has been doing to address this issue?

**Hon. Mr. Takhar:** When we found out that paperwork was one of the major issues facing the business community, we went around, along with the Minister of Government Services, to find out how many business forms were out there. We found out that there were about 5,000 forms. Then we decided to tackle the issue of paper burden with about seven ministries. Our target was to reduce about 20% of the paper burden in the first year. I'm pleased to say that in the seven ministries in the first year, along with the help of the Minister of Government Services and the Small Business Agency of Ontario, we have been able to reduce it by 24%.

Not only have we done that but, along with the Minister of Labour, we have also bundled some of the rules and regulations by industry segment so that businesses can have easy access to all that information.

### AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** I have a question for the Premier. You have asked the Auditor General to look into the activities vis-à-vis your Ministers of Citizenship and Culture regarding the funds disbursed at the end of last fiscal year. Will you guarantee this Legislature that you will release the auditor's report—the unabridged copy of that report—immediately after you receive it from the Auditor General of Ontario?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** Yes, we will do that.

### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** My question is to the Minister of Education. Public education in Ontario is becoming a two-tier system. Public schools that are able to fundraise have it all, and other schools that can't have less.

Under this government, parents who have time, money and know-how get operational and capital improvements; those who don't, receive their education in conditions that are less than excellent.

Minister, do you think it's acceptable that schools in a wealthy neighbourhood get baseball and soccer fields, AstroTurf and cheering sections in their playgrounds while poorer schools get "unusable, muddy messes" instead?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** No, I don't, which is why we have provided money to the system in the amount of \$4 billion to make repairs, build and do renovations in schools. I don't think it's acceptable at all, and I take the issue of fundraising very



seriously. As I have said a number of times in the House, it is up to boards to make sure that resources are distributed equitably.

If we're talking about the overall state of the education system, I think that one of the groups the member opposite likes to quote from has said something today that would be of great interest to him. Annie Kidder, executive director of People for Education, said today, about some information that came out from the Canadian Council on Learning: "This new information shows that Ontario has much to be proud of. It's important that we remember that overall Ontario does an excellent job educating its students.... It is vital that we frame our calls for improvement in an understanding that the system itself is essentially healthy and worthy of our support."

**Mr. Marchese:** Minister, I think you should ponder the following. I have here a copy of a fundraising pamphlet distributed in your riding. This school is asking each family for at least a \$250 donation, for which they will get a charitable tax receipt, to build their field of dreams, because their playground is "an unusable, muddy mess." Parents will have to raise \$430,000 for this playground. I believe that in your riding of Don Valley West, children in Thorncliffe deserve the same quality playground as students in Leaside, not unusable, muddy messes.

Minister, what is happening to many, many schools that can't afford to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars under your watch?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** I'm not going to focus on my riding, although one of the schools that is getting a new playground is actually in Flemingdon Park. It's got a new playground.

I understand that the member opposite is talking about fundraising that's being done by a particular area. There have been dollars raised for decades for computers, for playground equipment, for various items. It is not acceptable to me that there would be a two-tier system. It is not acceptable to me that there would be inequitable allocation of resources. It is up to the school boards and it is up to trustees to make sure that resources are allocated equitably.

The member opposite was a school trustee. He knows that this is an issue that school boards have been dealing with for years. They will continue to deal with it. We have put \$4 billion into the system that boards can access for repairs and capital improvements. That's more than boards have had to deal with for many, many years.

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## BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** My question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Honey bees not only provide honey but also the pollination services for many fruits and vegetables throughout agriculture in Ontario. Honey bees are important pollinators of agricultural crops, particularly in my riding of Essex, where our main farm commodities need honey bees, including our greenhouses that benefit from the help of these bees.

As you are aware, this past winter the mortality rates of bees were unusually high in Ontario. Estimates have shown they are as high as 35% province-wide. In fact, I have a beekeeper who started out with 122 colonies and has only one left. The price of bee nucleus is going up to \$210 a colony, and it would cost this person \$25,000 to replace their bees. We also have 37 other beekeepers in my riding, for a total of 2,210 registered hives.

What is our government doing to help the beekeeping industry address some of these losses?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** This is a very important issue, and I want to share with the members of this Legislature that this is something that I have been asked about by the media on a rather regular basis.

There is no question that bees are very important to the agriculture economy in the province of Ontario and, as has been identified, they do play an essential role in the fruit and vegetable industry. Often, people think that bees produce honey and that is their only role in this industry. That is not so. In fact, their value in helping to pollinate crops is in the neighbourhood of \$171 million.

So my ministry has certainly been watching this situation very closely. I have asked folks at the University of Guelph as well as staff at the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to define a study to look into this issue. As well, my ministry and the university are working with the Ontario Beekeepers' Association to define this study so we can ensure that the effects are—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Mr. Crozier:** I know the beekeepers in my riding will be pleased to know that our government is working to address this issue head-on. I note that you mentioned the Ontario Beekeepers' Association in your response, and I understand you met with them recently to discuss a number of issues, such as the impact of winter losses, pollination of Ontario crops this season, honey prices and support programs for their industry.

Specifically, I gather the issue of compensation for winter losses was raised by the Ontario Beekeepers' Association. This is an important issue to beekeepers in my riding and across the province, who have reported significant financial loss as a result of honey bees dying off. The beekeepers of Essex and the rest of Ontario need help in rebuilding their industry. Minister, what government supports currently exist to assist the beekeeping industry financially during this difficult period?

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** This is a very important issue, and I also want to comment that I have been approached by members on all sides of the House, because you have been approached by constituents in your riding. I do want to say that this is an issue that we are taking very seriously.

I have met with the Ontario Beekeepers' Association. I have certainly given them my commitment that we will do all we can to see what we can do to address the concerns and the issues they have raised with me. In addition to that, OMAFRA also already spends \$115,000

to conduct research in this area and \$149,000 has been spent over the last three years to investigate parasite control. I also want to remind folks in this Legislature that our Premier awarded the very first Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence to a beekeeper in the riding of Prince Edward-Hastings. That was Mr. VanderDussen. This man was on the cutting edge of developing a very environmentally friendly technology that goes in the hive to prevent the varroa mite. So our ministry, our government is committed to ensuring this industry is—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

### RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, over the last few weeks, we have heard a lot about all the money this government has wasted on political slush funds, and I'm sure your ministry had one of those hidden somewhere. Municipalities that actually filled out the paperwork and spent a lot of money completing their application were shut out of COMRIF funding by this government without any rhyme or reason.

Middlesex county says they don't understand how applications were evaluated or approved. Their MPPs—your colleagues—haven't been able to help them. Minister, what are you going to do for communities like Middlesex county, Brantford, Callander and many others that have spent money on applications and were shut out of your infrastructure lottery?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** I think that it truly is unfortunate that the member opposite doesn't appreciate the partnership the McGuinty government has entered into. Over the last three years, there was over \$900 million in investment in rural infrastructure. I would offer that that's \$900 million more than you invested when you were in government.

This is a partnership with municipalities, with the federal government and with the province. The honourable member is shaking his head. He obviously hasn't got a clue what he has asked a question about. This is a partnership. There is a secretariat where federal representatives and provincial representatives adjudicate the applications that come forward. There is a plethora; there certainly are more applications than we have dollars for. We have begun to invest in rural infrastructure. That is something the previous government neglected for eight years. We have made \$900 million of investment, and it has been money well spent.

### PETITIONS

#### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** I have a petition here for the Legislative Assembly of

Ontario. I want to thank the parishioners of St. Lawrence O'Toole's church in Barry's Bay as well as St. Hedwig's, and also the staff of St. Casimir's Catholic School in Round Lake.

"Petition to the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I enthusiastically support this petition and send it down with Liam.

### REGULATION OF ZOOS

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I have a petition today to the Ontario Legislative Assembly to regulate zoos to protect animals and communities.

"Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

"Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

"Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

"Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife, and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and

"Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act."

I support this petition and will affix my signature to it and give it to page Joel.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

"Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

"Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

"Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife, and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and



"Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act."

I have about 186 signatures here.

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### HYDRO SERVICES

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa—Orléans):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the city of Ottawa was amalgamated in 2001;

"Whereas, since that time, residents from Cumberland ward and Orléans ward have been receiving dissimilar hydroelectricity services and paying different rates from either Hydro One or Hydro Ottawa, depending only on their mailing address;

"Whereas Orléans ward Councillor Bob Monette and Cumberland ward Councillor Rob Jellett have received numerous complaints towards hydro services and rates from Hydro One;

"Whereas the remainder of the amalgamated city of Ottawa is receiving their hydroelectricity services from a single provider and paying identical rates from Hydro Ottawa;

"We, the undersigned, petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ontario Legislative Assembly ask the minister responsible for hydroelectricity services to end this injustice to Orléans and Cumberland wards and take the necessary actions so that those residents are treated fairly and equally by being serviced by the same single hydroelectricity provider for the city of Ottawa, Hydro Ottawa."

I am pleased to say that the government has taken action. It has accepted the 33% transfer tax and has permitted the sale of hydro utilities between one utility and another. I'm very pleased to sign this petition.

### PARENTING EDUCATION

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** "Whereas effective parenting practices do not come instinctively and parenting is our most crucial social role, parenting and human development courses need to be taught to all secondary school students. Parenting education will: reduce teen pregnancies; reduce the rate of costly fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and increase the number of healthy pregnancies; reduce the number of costly social problems related to ineffective parenting practices; and improve the 'social fabric' of Ontario to create a more civil society. Parenting education for students is considered to be socially valuable by a majority of adults of voting age and should be included as a mandatory credit course within the Ontario curriculum;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the requirements for the Ontario

secondary school diploma to include one senior level ... as a compulsory credit."

I agree with this and will sign it.

### ANTI-IDLING BYLAWS

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot):** I have a petition from the SAVE group, Students Against Violating the Environment. It reads as follows:

"To the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the fact that idling of cars is a major contributor to climate change, poor air quality and a waste of valuable resources—action should be taken by the Parliament of Ontario against it;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Be it resolved that the provincial government, through the Ministry of the Environment, immediately initiate discussion with its municipal partners, ideally through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, so as to move beyond the patchwork quilt of existing and important municipal anti-idling bylaws to a provincially generic piece of legislation with enforcement mechanisms that can be universally applied across the entire province."

I give this to page Rebecca.

### HIGHWAY 35

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton—Victoria—Brock):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas modern highways are economic lifelines to communities across Ontario and crucial to the growth of Ontario's economy; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation has been planning the expansion of Highway 35, and that expansion has been put on hold by the McGuinty government; and

"Whereas Highway 35 provides an important economic link in the overall transportation system—carrying commuter, commercial and high tourist volumes to and from the Kawartha Lakes area and Haliburton; and

"Whereas the final round of public consultation has just been rescheduled;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government move swiftly to complete the four-laning of Highway 35 after the completion of the final public consultation."

It's signed by many members of the Kawartha Lakes Chamber of Commerce. I'll hand it over to page Colin.

### GRAVESITES OF FORMER PREMIERS

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont—Dundas—Charlottenburgh):** I have a petition signed by a number of members from the London and Middlesex County branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society. It reads as follows.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Premiers of Ontario have made enormous contributions over the years in shaping the Ontario of today; and

"Whereas, as a result, the final resting places of the 18 deceased Premiers are among the most historically significant sites in the province, but have yet to be officially recognized; and

"Whereas, were these gravesites to be properly maintained and marked with an historical plaque and a flag of Ontario, these locations would be a source of pride to the communities where these former Premiers lie buried, and provide potential points of interest for visitors;

"Now therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Enact Bill 25, An Act that will preserve the grave-sites of the former Premiers of Ontario."

As I agree with this, I shall sign it and send it with Spencer.

### CONSENT TO TREATMENT

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** I have a petition to the government of Ontario in Parliament assembled, and it reads as follows.

"We, the undersigned, draw the attention of the House to the following:

"Whereas the Health Care Consent Act of Ontario gives to all health practitioners, indiscriminately, the sole authority to determine whether or not a child of any age has the capacity to give or refuse consent to treatment proposed for him or her; and

"Whereas many of the health care practitioners who are required to make such judgments have neither the training nor the knowledge of child development such that their judgments could be considered informed; and

"Whereas health care practitioners in the family planning industry are notoriously biased in their approach to supplying abortions and chemical contraceptives/abortifacients to minors; and

"Whereas the HCCA is unconstitutional as it provides no opportunity for parents to prevent health care practitioners from providing inappropriate treatment to their child before it is administered, nor any mechanism for redress afterwards;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the Health Care Consent Act to prohibit health care practitioners from administering a plan of treatment proposed for a child who lives under the care and control of a custodial parent without the prior consent of the custodial parent, whether or not the health care practitioner is of the opinion that the child is capable with respect to the plan of treatment."

### REGULATION OF ZOOS

**Ms. Deborah Matthews (London North Centre):** I'm pleased to present a very thick petition from people in the London area and across Ontario.

"Petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly

"Whereas Ontario has the weakest zoo laws in the country; and

"Whereas existing zoo regulations are vague, unenforceable and only apply to native wildlife; and

"Whereas there are no mandatory standards to ensure adequate care and housing for zoo animals or the health and safety of animals, zoo staff, the visiting public or neighbouring communities; and

"Whereas several people have been injured by captive wildlife, and zoo escapes are frequent in Ontario; and

"Whereas these same regulatory gaps were affirmed recently by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario in his annual report;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP David Zimmer's bill, the Regulation of Zoos Act."

I will give this to Elizabeth to take to the table.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### LONG-TERM CARE HOMES ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR LES FOYERS DE SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 15, 2007, on the motion for third reading of Bill 140, An Act respecting long-term care homes / Projet de loi 140, Loi concernant les foyers de soins de longue durée.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 16, 2007, I'm now required to put the question. On March 29, 2007, Mr. Smitherman moved third reading of Bill 140. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1559 to 1609.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Order, please.

All those in favour will please rise to be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne	Fonseca, Peter	Peters, Steve
Balkissoon, Bas	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Bartolucci, Rick	Gravelle, Michael	Pupatello, Sandra
Bradley, James J.	Hoy, Pat	Qadri, Shafiq
Broten, Laurel C.	Kular, Kuldeep	Ramal, Khalil
Brownell, Jim	Kwinter, Monte	Ramsay, David
Bryant, Michael	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Rinaldi, Lou
Cansfield, Donna H.	Leal, Jeff	Ruprecht, Tony
Caplan, David	Levac, Dave	Sandals, Liz
Chan, Michael	Marsales, Judy	Sergio, Mario
Colle, Mike	Matthews, Deborah	Smith, Monique
Crozier, Bruce	Mauro, Bill	Smitherman, George
Delaney, Bob	McGuinty, Dalton	Takhar, Harinder S.
Di Cocco, Caroline	McMeekin, Ted	Van Bommel, Maria
Dombrowsky, Leona	McNeely, Phil	Watson, Jim
Duncan, Dwight	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Patten, Richard	Zimmer, David



**The Acting Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise to be recorded.

#### Nays

Arnott, Ted  
Barrett, Toby  
Bisson, Gilles  
Chudleigh, Ted  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Ferreira, Paul

Hardeman, Ernie  
Hudak, Tim  
MacLeod, Lisa  
Martel, Shelley  
Martiniuk, Gerry  
Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia

Runciman, Robert W.  
Savoline, Joyce  
Scott, Laurie  
Witmer, Elizabeth  
Yakabuski, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 51; the nays are 19.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I think I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the great people in our gallery today who worked so hard on Bill 140 to make this a reality.

Today, we have with us from Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care: Bella Fox, Karyn Wasserstein, Scott MacEachern, Peggy Mackenzie, John Gross, Debbie Latter, Margaret Allore, Jean McCartney, Neil VanderKooy, Connie Berg, Irene Medcof, Mary Marafioti, Jane Sager, Joan Belford, Vahe Kehyayan, Susan Picarello, Tim Burns, David Clarke, Lynn Richardson, and missing but very much with us in spirit are Louise Edmonds, Gail Ure, Pritti Sachdeva. I want to thank each and every one of them on behalf of everyone here.

### SAFEGUARDING AND SUSTAINING ONTARIO'S WATER ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR LA SAUVEGARDE ET LA DURABILITÉ DES EAUX DE L'ONTARIO

Ms. Broten moved third reading of the following act:

Bill 198, An Act to amend the Ontario Water Resources Act to safeguard and sustain Ontario's water, to make related amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 and to repeal the Water Transfer Control Act /  
Projet de loi 198, Loi visant à modifier la Loi sur les ressources en eau de l'Ontario afin d'assurer la sauvegarde et la durabilité des eaux de l'Ontario, à apporter des modifications connexes à la Loi de 2002 sur la salubrité de l'eau potable et à abroger la Loi sur le contrôle des transferts d'eau.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Ms. Broten.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I'm so pleased to have the opportunity to rise today and speak about Bill 198. I can tell you that I will be sharing my time with my colleague Minister Ramsay, who I know also wants to talk about this critical and important act.

Since the beginning of our mandate, protecting and preserving our water resources has been an absolute key priority of our government, and I am so very proud of the

progress that we've made. I'm also proud to be part of a government that is committed to environmental protection and that continues to take the necessary steps to sustain our province's very rich and abundant natural resources.

Safe and sustainable water is fundamental to life itself. It is vital in maintaining our quality of life. This is true for each and every one of us living in this great province. It's as true for our children as it will be for many future generations of Ontarians to come.

Je suis si fière des progrès que nous avons accomplis. Je suis fière également de faire partie d'un gouvernement qui est résolu à protéger l'environnement et qui continue à prendre les mesures requises pour sauvegarder les riches ressources naturelles de notre province.

Il est capital pour la vie même d'assurer la pérennité et la sûreté des ressources en eau. Cela est capital pour maintenir notre qualité de vie et c'est vrai pour nous tous qui vivons aujourd'hui dans notre merveilleuse province.

The passage of Bill 198 will allow us to implement the historic Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement, which we signed in December 2005 with Quebec and eight US Great Lakes states. The agreement is historic because for the first time it provides a framework for all 10 participating jurisdictions to better manage, protect and conserve the waters of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin. Through this agreement, participating governments have pledged to adopt shared management principles and to use a common basis for decision-making. This will allow us to take a more integrated approach to managing the quantity and quality of our water. It will help us understand where our water is being taken from, where it's going and how it's being used. The agreement also provides for a ban on water transfers out of the Great Lakes.

We know that we cannot work alone in protecting these shared waters. What is new is that the agreement would extend this ban to all 10 Great Lakes jurisdictions. By passing Bill 198, we would be giving our ban the full effect of Ontario provincial law.

Under the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin agreement, Ontario is committed to working with its Great Lakes neighbours to reinforce basin-wide environmental standards, increase water conservation efforts and improve science-based decision-making. The bill is building on the critical work that is already under way to protect and sustain Ontario's water resources.

We know that there is more to do, but we are on the right path. Today I had the pleasure of hearing California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger talk about our shared responsibility when it comes to protecting our environment and fighting climate change. I'm so very proud of Premier McGuinty for entering into a memorandum of understanding between the province of Ontario and the state of California for collaboration on climate change and energy efficiency.

Responding to the impacts of climate change is one of the driving forces behind the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence



River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement. I'm so pleased that Ontario has allies on both sides of the border when it comes to fighting climate change, improving our air, and protecting our great shared resources like the Great Lakes. Ontario pushed very hard to include recognition of climate change and the need for precaution in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement, and we succeeded. One of the most progressive aspects of the proposed Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act is that we are including provisions for addressing the effects of global climate change on the Great Lakes region.

We already know about some of the effects of climate change in the region. We're seeing shorter winters, increasing annual average temperatures, more frequent extreme heat events, shorter duration of the lake ice cover, and more frequent heavy precipitation, both rain and snow. These effects can have major consequences in a region that is home to 60 million people and has varied topography and ecosystems, immense bodies of water, large wetland areas, fertile southern soils, forests and rugged lands to the north.

1620

We need to stay at the forefront of knowledge on how climate change will affect the region, and we need to be able to use this knowledge to strengthen our collective protection of the Great Lakes. This act will enable us to do exactly that. For example, the effects of climate change would be taken into account when changes are made to the standards that will be applied when approving withdrawals from the Great Lakes basin and transfers between the Great Lakes watersheds.

Managing our valuable water resources is absolutely vital to ensuring the future success, health and sustainability of Ontario. That is why Bill 198 would give the government the authority to introduce a new water regulatory charge on industrial and commercial users of water to help recover some of the costs of managing Ontario's water resources. Businesses across our province rely on safe, clean, secure, abundant supplies of water. Currently, however, large commercial and industrial water users pay absolutely nothing toward the province's cost of managing the water that they use. It is time to end the endless giveaway of Ontario's water, right now. Accordingly, Bill 198 would allow us to introduce regulatory charges for these high-volume users. But I want to remind the House and Ontarians right across the province that the new charges will not apply to water taken for hydro power, agriculture, private domestic wells, or domestic and other non-commercial uses on municipal supplies. Charges will not apply to institutions such as schools and health care facilities, or to environmental uses such as wetland projects.

I want to take a moment to thank the numerous individuals who appeared before the standing committee to express their thoughts and concerns about Bill 198. I can tell you that we listened to Ontarians and have responded by proposing a number of amendments.

I want to pause for a moment to thank my parliamentary assistant, the member for Peterborough, Jeff

Leal, who listened to and worked with the groups that came before us to talk about this most important and historic piece of legislation, Bill 198. We received their advice and we listened carefully.

We received advice that the proposed legislation covering water transfers between watersheds did not go far enough. Bill 198's water conservation provisions have been strengthened, and they have been strengthened because we listened to those experts, like the Sierra Club of Canada, the Canadian Environmental Law Association, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and the Georgian Bay Association. I want to take a moment to thank them for their advice and input. This is the way that good legislation is made even better: when we talk to those experts around this province and we collectively work together to ensure that we will have a safe and sustainable supply of water for many, many years to come.

One of the amendments that we made would allow us to make regulations requiring that water transfers between Great Lakes watersheds of less than 19 million litres a day be returned to the watersheds from which they were taken. Nineteen million litres is the amount stipulated in the agreement between all 10 Great Lakes jurisdictions.

Another proposed amendment would introduce a regulation-making authority to require water users who do not have a permit to take water to prepare and implement water conservation plans.

A third amendment would require the Minister of the Environment to seek comment from the public on what actions the government should take in response to assessments of cumulative impacts on the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin, including the impact of climate change.

Our proposed Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act is further proof of our government's commitment to protecting and preserving Ontario's water resources. For our government, water protection is an absolute priority.

La Loi sur la sauvegarde et la durabilité des eaux de l'Ontario que nous proposons d'adopter est encore une autre preuve de la détermination avec laquelle notre gouvernement agit pour protéger et préserver les ressources en eau de l'Ontario. Pour notre gouvernement, la protection des eaux est une priorité.

In 2005 we introduced the historic Clean Water Act, which recognizes that prevention must be the first barrier in protecting Ontario's drinking water resources, and that source water protection must be planned and managed on a shared local watershed basis. We can never forget what happened in Walkerton, where seven people died and hundreds were made ill from contaminated water. That is why we are absolutely committed to implementing all of Justice O'Connor's Walkerton recommendations.

Over the past four years, we've introduced more rigorous requirements for those who own and operate water treatment plants. We've increased the inspection requirements for water treatment plants and drinking



water testing labs. We've hired more water treatment inspectors and enforcement specialists. All of these measures are designed to protect and maintain the quality of Ontario's water resources and to ensure the good health of our people and a high quality of life for them to enjoy for years to come.

I had a chance, when we had constituency week, to spend some time in my great riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore; I'm privileged to represent that community here in the Legislature. As I talked to my community about the work that was under way—the work I was doing on their behalf at Queen's Park—I talked to them about our fight to protect the Great Lakes, because the great riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore is on the shore of Lake Ontario, one of those Great Lakes. It is so critical to the quality of life and well-being of my community that we continue to work for all Ontarians. Absolutely, we must work to improve their health care, and we've done that across the province as well as in my home community with investments in our Trillium Health Centre, the Dorothy Ley Hospice, a commitment to family health teams and more resources for our community health centres. We've done that in terms of education: historic investments at Humber College, again on the shore of the Lake Ontario, where we announced \$9 million in investments last week.

But most importantly, I talked to them about how we were going to make the Great Lakes accessible and part of our community once again with the construction of the new Mimico Waterfront Linear Park as part of Etobicoke-Lakeshore to bring the residents of our community back down to the shore of Lake Ontario, for them to remember each and every day why we are undertaking these new protections for the Great Lakes.

I'm pleased to represent the people of Etobicoke-Lakeshore and to serve in this House as their representative and as Minister of the Environment. But I'm also pleased to be a mom and to walk along the shore of the great Lake Ontario with my boys and know that we in this Legislature, when we hopefully pass this legislation, will collectively have done something to ensure that future generations will have sustainable, clean drinking water—that that resource will be available.

Bill 198 furthers the tremendous progress we've made in water protection and reinforces our efforts to provide strong leadership and environmental stewardship on behalf of all the people of Ontario. By protecting our water resources, managing them wisely, we're building stronger, healthier communities and ensuring a brighter, better, more prosperous future for people right across this great province. I'm confident that that is the goal of all members of this House; that it is a goal we all share. I look forward to swift passage of Bill 198, when we in Ontario will all be able to celebrate sustained and safeguarded water for many years to come.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to add a few comments this afternoon on third reading of Bill 198. I note that we have a number of

members who wish to speak to this bill this afternoon, so I'm not going to go over the whole bill but will allow time for our environment critic, the member from Haliburton-Victoria-Brock, and also the member from Leeds-Grenville, who have some concerns that they would like to get on the record and, I believe, the member from Waterloo-Wellington as well.

With Bill 198, the McGuinty government has promised to strengthen the management, protection and conservation of the Great Lakes and all of Ontario's water resources. However, as has already been mentioned, this bill has a troubling loophole that has caused significant concern for many stakeholders and will inevitably limit the bill's ability to effectively protect our water resources.

**1630**

Even though the proposed legislation bans diversions out of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin, it still permits diversions between individual Great Lakes watersheds within the basin.

At the committee level, the PC Party put forward some 20 amendments to the bill, which came out of the comments of the groups that came before the committee. They were all constructive on a variety of different issues. The one that was of greatest interest to me, as the member who represents the riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka and Georgian Bay, was the one that would affect water levels in the Great Lakes. I hope the Minister of Natural Resources, who is going to speak shortly, will address this issue as well. I know he's very familiar with the Georgian Bay area, because he enjoys getting out on his sailboat in the summer season, and I'm sure he would be very much aware of water levels, going in and out of harbours in that sailboat.

One of the amendments that was made at committee by the PC Party would have basically required that if you take water out of a watershed—example, Georgian Bay or Lake Huron—and use the water for, say, municipal purposes, that the water be put back into the same watershed. It's fairly straightforward: If you take it out of Georgian Bay, it goes back into Georgian Bay. It comes out as drinking water and goes back in as treated sewage. It goes back into the same watershed. That is a real concern.

What I don't want to see is water going out of Georgian Bay or Lake Huron and ending up in Lake Erie or Lake Ontario, because we have a significant challenge with water levels in Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. That's been pointed out by the Georgian Bay Association; Mary Muter has done a lot of work on that. They've spent \$250,000 on the Baird report, looking at the drain of Georgian Bay, and have identified that too much water is flowing out and we need to do work on that problem.

Also, we brought forward an amendment at the committee level, and I'll just read it:

“Return of transferred water

“(4) Despite any other provision of this act, a person who transfers water between Great Lakes watersheds



shall ensure that the water is returned to the Great Lakes watershed from which it was taken.”

A fairly straightforward concept; no grey area about it. You take it out of Georgian Bay or Lake Huron, and you put it back into Lake Huron. I think that's a rational approach, especially when we have communities to the south that would like to put in big pipes, and the easiest thing to do is take water out and let it drain into one of the lower watersheds. That is a real concern to the people who use Georgian Bay—the people in the riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka—and I know that the members for Simcoe–Grey and Simcoe North are very concerned about this as well. I think it's a real concern for people who worry about the effect that lower water levels will have on environmental issues, like the wetlands along the coast of Georgian Bay. I wanted to speak to that point only, because I know that we have many other members who would like to speak to other parts of this bill and we have limited time to do so.

I see this bill as being a first step. It could have been stronger if some of those 20 amendments that were put forward by the PC Party had been passed. I will be supporting the bill, despite its shortcomings, and, if necessary, fix it once we're in government. It's a first step, and we support the first step. I look forward to hearing the Minister of Natural Resources address the concern I have raised.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate? The member from Parkdale–High Park.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** I'm hoping I can leave the bulk of the time for my benchmate, Mr. Bisson, to speak to this bill.

First of all, I want to comment on the time allocation aspect of it. Of course, this is a government that, when they were in opposition, were very opposed to time allocation—a limiting of debate. Now that they're on the other side of the aisle, they're all about time allocation.

Certainly, we in the New Democratic Party like to see debate, like to see a chance to discuss bills, and don't like to see debate cut short, which is happening here tonight. For those who are watching from home, that's point number one.

Point number two: There's a rather delicious irony that we just discovered there is lead in the water here at Queen's Park. This is news on CBC today. This is a government that's supposed to be protecting our natural resources, this is a bill about water and water quality, and yet here we have lead in the water. It's actually a kind of wonderful metaphor for what's problematic about those who are sitting across the aisle from me, don't you think? Perhaps it explains some of the poor legislation that comes out of them, if they've been drinking it for a long time; I don't know. At any rate, there you go: lead in the water right here at Queen's Park. It will be rather interesting to see what the Minister of Natural Resources, the Minister of the Environment and others have to say about that. I'm a little reticent even to pick up my glass right now, quite frankly, and I gather there are warnings even

for those who have coffee makers in their offices about boiling the water.

More to the point, I think what is ironic about this government—particularly after today, as we saw Dalton McGuinty standing there next to Schwarzenegger from California—is the difference between, for example, California and Ontario. Right off the bat, California has had a moratorium on nuclear reactors since 1976. This government is barrelling ahead, spending \$40 billion to \$45 billion on nuclear reactors, and claims to be a green government. This is the government, we remember, that the Environmental Commissioner said was neglecting their obligations. The report was *Neglecting Our Obligations*, with a damning indictment of the McGuinty Liberals and their stay in power in terms of the environment.

Of course, first and foremost, when we think of the environment and we think of the McGuinty Liberals, we think of broken promises, and predominantly the broken promise about the coal-fired plants. What was it back in 2003? We were going to close them immediately. Where are we? Nowhere close; not even a date now, no real commitment there. Certainly we know that Nanticoke is one of the major polluters, if not the major polluter, in all of Canada. So there you go. This is a government that claims they're green and they can't even close one coal-fired plant, and that was an election promise.

Then we see some very weak-kneed legislation that comes forward. We're going to support this because, hey, it's a baby step in the right direction, but this is another piece of weak-kneed Liberal legislation around the environment.

If anybody has seen Al Gore's film *An Inconvenient Truth*, and I'm sure we all have, we are looking at a serious challenge. We are looking at the possibility of an uninhabitable world for our children and our grandchildren. We're already looking at huge levels of asthma in our own communities, smog days already, and we're not even into the heat of the summer. And yet what does this government do? Again, it brings forth things that sound good, photo op moments, but nothing with teeth, nothing real, nothing that we can really say will protect the future for our children.

Here we have a situation—and, again, I'm going to leave most of the time for my benchmate, Mr. Bisson—talking about water. What are they going to do? I'm going to quote to you from Mr. Tabuns, who is our environment critic. He said, and I'm quoting from Hansard here:

“So we do need to protect our water sources and we need to have a source of income to protect them. And \$3.71 per million litres is going to generate, we've been told, \$18 million a year, essentially the cost of administration—not the cost of a water conservation program, not the cost of water quality protection, not the cost of water quality surveillance. It is not going to make a financial difference at that end and, frankly, at the other end it's not going to change anyone's practices when it comes to taking water. It's just too little”—and one can say just too little, way too late—“\$3.71 per million litres.



I think it's a fabulous deal," says he, ironically, "if you can get it, but it ain't going to change what needs to be changed."

Many of us have seen the movie *Chinatown*, about a fictitious but real situation which that movie is based on. And we have a kind of *Chinatown* in the making right here at Queen's Park.

With that, I think I'll take a break, but suffice to say to anybody watching from home that this is a government that pretends to be green but isn't at all. And today was an example of a classic McGuinty manoeuvre: the photo op with somebody who is actually doing something in another jurisdiction while we here are doing less than nothing.

1640

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** It's a pleasure for me to rise in the House today with my colleague the Minister of the Environment to move third reading of the Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act, 2007.

This proposed legislation to amend the Ontario Water Resources Act is another major step forward in conserving and protecting the waters of the Great Lakes basin for the future generations of Ontarians. If passed, the legislation would implement the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement, an agreement signed in late 2005 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, by Premier McGuinty and representatives from Quebec and the eight neighbouring Great Lakes states.

In the Great Lakes agreement, the 10 jurisdictions in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin agreed to protect one of the continent's most precious natural resources. And they agreed to do that by prohibiting water transfers out of the basin subject to rare, strictly regulated exceptions; promoting water conservation; reinforcing basin-wide environmental standards for water-takings; and improving science-based decision-making.

We all know the Great Lakes and the rivers and underground waters that flow into them are vital to Ontario's economy, environment and culture. At the same time, we face a number of challenges in sustainably managing our Ontario waters. Climate change is resulting in unpredictable shifts in temperature and weather. Next door in the United States, more people are moving to arid southwestern states, making it more likely that these states will be seeking new sources of water. And the global population continues to grow, increasing the demand for water worldwide. More than one commentator has predicted that water will become the oil of the 21st century.

Ontario's strong controls on water use, including a ban on transfers out of Ontario's water basins, have already made it a leader in water management in the Great Lakes region. But Ontario's laws only apply to the water within its borders, and the water doesn't respect political boundaries. Effective protection for the waters of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin requires action from all 10 jurisdictions. That's why Ontario has been deeply

committed to negotiating a set of rules on water use and transfer for all provinces and states in the basin.

When it became clear that other jurisdictions were willing to negotiate a basin-wide agreement, this province recognized it as a rare and even a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to achieve regional co-operation in managing these interconnected waters.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the team from the Ministries of Natural Resources and Intergovernmental Affairs who negotiated the agreement on behalf of Ontario. Many of them are in the House today. They're in the members' gallery on the east side, and I would like to certainly acknowledge their very hard work. They did an outstanding job during some very tough negotiations over several years, and I want to thank them for their hard work.

Shortly after I was sworn in as Minister of Natural Resources, in October 2003, I was presented with a briefing as to what had already been agreed to. When I saw that, I really thought we could do better. After consultation with the people of Ontario, it was agreed by the government of Ontario that we would basically tell our negotiators to go back and to really see if we could raise the bar when it came to that. So our negotiators need to be congratulated for doing that, because they thought they had a deal, and we said "Well, you can blame it on the new government." I think all the neighbouring states and Quebec are very happy with what we've all accomplished together as jurisdictions, because we all have the same values and respect for our Great Lakes water basin. So we're very happy with this agreement.

The agreement we have commits each of the provinces and states to seek, adopt and implement the terms of this agreement as the law within their borders. I would like to take a moment to outline some of the strong new protections in the final Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement. Maybe I should just explain for a second what I just said about what this agreement compels us to do as jurisdictions. We don't have the powers as states and provinces to enter into international agreements, but we can come together and agree to form laws in our own jurisdictions. So we formed a mechanism to do that and to have some standing in a court, if necessary, down the road if we are not implementing into our own specific laws what we have agreed to do.

In the agreement, the 10 provinces and states have agreed to ban transfers of water with rare, strictly regulated exceptions, such as for communities that straddle the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin boundary or the boundaries between the Great Lakes watersheds. They agreed to strengthen water conservation through programs in each state and province. We've agreed to establish a stronger new environmental standard for regulating water uses across all the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin states and provinces and to build the information and science needed to support sound decision-making.

We also agreed to build regional collaboration—for example, in the review of water management and conser-



vation programs. To oversee water uses across the basin, the 10 provinces and states agreed to create a regional body made up of representatives from each jurisdiction. They agreed to provide a stronger voice for Ontario, its citizens and First Nations in the regional review of water use resources by other jurisdictions that are expected to prohibit other transfers.

Finally, they agreed to recognize the principles of precaution, ecosystem protection and the consideration of the cumulative impacts of climate change uncertainties. These are significant commitments that will protect the integrity of the Great Lakes basin for future generations.

In the 18 months since I informed the House that Premier McGuinty had signed this historic agreement, we have been working hard to develop the legislation that, if passed, will enable the implementation of this agreement in Ontario. This proposed legislation is now before the House and is the critical next step in conserving and protecting the waters of the Great Lakes basin and all of our water resources for the long-term environmental, social and economic well-being of Ontario.

If passed, Bill 198 would elevate Ontario's ban on transfers of water out of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin and Ontario's other water basins from a regulation to be part of the act to emphasize the importance of the prohibition.

Bill 198 would also introduce a ban on new and increased transfers of water from one Great Lakes watershed to another—known as intra-basin transfers—unless strict environmental criteria are met. To give the government more latitude to control intra-basin transfers, the proposed legislation would enable the government to further restrict such transfers beyond what is required by the Great Lakes agreement. Bill 198 would allow Ontario to pass regulations that, for example, could lower the threshold at which water transferred between two Great Lakes watersheds must be returned to the source watershed or introduce additional environmental criteria to respond to cumulative impacts and the effects of climate change.

In addition to these measures, Bill 198 will permit Quebec and the eight Great Lakes states to seek an appeal to the Environmental Review Tribunal or seek judicial review of Ontario's decisions on water withdrawals and the transfers subject to the agreement. This section would not come into force until the other Great Lakes jurisdictions provide Ontario with similar rights to access to their courts.

Bill 198 would create the authority to pass regulations to further support the implementation of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement. For example, an additional regulation would require measures to promote water conservation and water use efficiency and introduce an environmental decision-making standard for the review of proposed water withdrawals.

Bill 198 would create the authority to prescribe additional criteria to respond to periodic assessments of cumulative impacts, including criteria relating to climate

change or other significant threats to the Great Lakes basin.

As my colleague the Minister of the Environment has said, this bill would also enable Ontario, for the first time, to introduce a regulatory charge for water taken or used for industrial or commercial purposes and extend the requirements for permits to take water.

During consideration of this bill, the government introduced amendments to Bill 198 that have gone beyond the requirements of the Great Lakes agreement in other ways. One such amendment would enable the province to require water users to prepare and implement water conservation plans. Another amendment to Bill 198 would require the environment minister to seek public comment on what actions the government should take in response to periodic basin-wide assessments of cumulative impacts, including climate change, and make a statement summarizing the actions that the government intends to take in response to that assessment. This amendment was prompted by our changing climate, which has heightened the need for more precautionary and adaptive measures.

Some parts of Bill 198 would come into effect immediately and others would be phased in gradually. If Bill 198 is passed, the government therefore proposes to hold discussions with stakeholders on interim control measures as the legislative framework is put into place. Any such measures would require full public consultation.

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As the House considers this bill, I would like to remind the members that in December 2006, Premier McGuinty became the chairman of the Great Lakes regional body. He will hold that position until December of this year, making this a highly appropriate time for us to pass the legislation.

I would also like to inform the House that on March 27, I signed a memorandum of understanding with Grand Council Chief John Beaucage on behalf of 42 Anishinabek nations.

Throughout the process of negotiating the Great Lakes agreement, we have been diligent in working with First Nations—including the Anishinabek nation—the public, and representatives of different interest groups.

As we move ahead with this important initiative, we need to build stronger relationships with First Nations and their political organizations, and the memorandum of understanding will help to make that a reality. This memorandum will build on the momentum we have already achieved, ensure that traditional Anishinabek principles and perspectives are considered, and enhance the implementation process.

In closing, I want to say that Bill 198, the proposed Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act, 2007, will continue Ontario's leadership role in protecting the Great Lakes water basin. If passed, it will represent significant progress towards the implementation of Ontario's commitments under the Great Lakes agreement.

But there is more to do. This government will continue to engage the annex advisory panel and Ontario's First



Nations and consult with the public as we develop the regulations and policies to support this bill.

Throughout it all, we will remain diligent in protecting Ontario's interests in the waters of the Great Lakes basin and all the waters across the province. It's a task that promises to remain a significant challenge in the years ahead, but by passing this legislation that would implement the historic Great Lakes agreement, we will continue to move forward to meet that challenge and to protect the waters that are central to the history and to the future of all Ontarians.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** I have some brief comments: Our party, the Progressive Conservative Party, will be supporting the legislation, but not without some concerns and an indication of commitment, if we do form the government, that those concerns will be addressed.

Certainly, there was no indication when I appeared before the justice committee a few weeks ago—on Wednesday, May 16, to be precise—and raised an issue that is of significant concern in a number of jurisdictions. I was specifically raising a concern brought to my attention by a company called Invista, between Brockville and Prescott—formerly the DuPont plant in Maitland—about a component of this legislation. I want to put those concerns on the record again. This is dealing with the definition of “consumptive use.” I’m going to quote from a letter that Invista sent to the Minister of the Environment:

“Given the potential trade implications, the need to promote a strong economy in Ontario and the importance of being competitive with other jurisdictions, the charges have the potential”—we’re talking about these consumptive use charges—“to further reduce the hospitable nature of Ontario’s business environment relative to other sites in which Invista is located around the globe. An appreciating Canadian dollar, high energy prices and low-cost labour in some parts of the world result in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. It is with this premise, along with the fact that Invista returns virtually all of the water it uses in as good or better condition, that it would only be fair and reasonable for there to be an exemption for water charges for water that is returned to the environment in this manner.

“While we recognize the need for the government ... to protect the natural resources ... and for Ontario to meet its obligations under the Great Lakes water agreement, Invista believes that Ontario must do so in a responsible manner that does not unfairly penalize companies that borrow and return water for manufacturing processes, particularly when such water is returned with a net benefit....

“One of the primary reasons Invista manufacturing operations were established in eastern Ontario was the access to large volumes of deep, cold water. The vast majority of this water is ‘borrowed’ from the source and used as a cooling agent for our manufacturing processes. For example”—I’ll skip some of this.

“Invista seeks the following recognition in the development of ... regulations:”

To “recognize the difference between consumptive and non-consumptive use in terms of the water-taking fees such that the non-consumptive users are not unfairly charged” and that it does not become “a significant cost burden. This is a significant concern for Invista, which borrows large volumes of water for cooling purposes.... The addition of a water charge levied against Invista Canada’s operations is counter to” the position of promoting a strong economy in Ontario and remaining competitive with other jurisdictions. “Invista operates in a fiercely competitive global marketplace, and a charge on Invista’s non-consumptive water use for manufacturing purposes would weaken our ability to compete in the global marketplace.”

That really sums it up. There was cold comfort given during the committee hearings when I raised this issue and looked for assurances from the government members. Instead of responding in a positive way, the parliamentary assistant—a good individual, but he performed the role that is sort of a signature piece of government members in committee, where they simply read from a text provided to them by the Premier’s office or the minister responsible. That’s what happened in this situation.

We know what’s happening to manufacturing in this province: a hollowing out. We’re losing significant numbers—there’s some debate whether it’s 137,000 or 175,000 jobs in terms of the manufacturing sector. I think we’re using the figure of 137,000 jobs lost in Ontario over the last two and a half years. This is the indication of a lack of appreciation and understanding of the implications of some of the initiatives undertaken by this government.

This is a company that is a solid corporate citizen, and has been for many years under previous ownership with DuPont, very much involved and very environmentally responsible. Here’s water that they are using for cooling purposes in their plant returned to the water body and no assurance is given to them that they will not be facing significant costs as a result of this legislation and the regulation to follow.

I raised the issue of the signatories to the Great Lakes agreement and how many are going down this road in sync with Ontario. I have not received the information. I’ve asked the legislative library to give me this information: How many other signatories have proceeded down this path? They tend to be major competitors of ours, and we’re going to be ahead of the curve in terms of additional costs in the manufacturing sector when we’re already losing our competitive edge. We did not get a satisfactory answer in that regard either. When you look at the process that’s followed in the US states, where the state has to endorse it, then they require the approval of Congress—then we’ll look and see whether specific sections are going to be implemented and whether they will apply the same kinds of interpretations that Ontario is applying in this respect to the definition of “consumptive use.”

This is a significant concern. A lot of areas of this legislation were not adequately addressed by the govern-



ment. This is one of them. If John Tory and the progressive Conservative Party are fortunate enough to form the government come October 10, I want to assure those who are concerned about issues like this that we will address them.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I'm very pleased to be able to make a few comments on the third reading of Bill 198, and I do want to thank my colleague the member from Haliburton–Victoria–Brock for her leadership on this particular piece of legislation. I really enjoyed my time sitting on some of the committee hearings with her and listening to the comments coming from individuals who made presentations to the standing committee.

I have a couple of strong concerns that I want to put on the record. Both people whom I know and respect very much, Judith Grant from the Tiny Township Shoreline Association—a number of cottage associations in Tiny township that made a presentation, as well as Mary Muter, whom I talked to earlier today about the Georgian Bay Association's concerns about Bill 198. I want to read this into the record:

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"The government has indicated an interest in bringing in regulations to restrict intra-basin transfers, but it's my understanding that we are likely two years away from implementing regulations, at a time when the middle Great Lakes have been at near-record low levels for over six years. It is inappropriate to allow any intra-basin transfers that have the potential to cumulatively further lower lake levels."

In my riding, the lake levels of Georgian Bay and Lake Huron are huge concerns to the municipalities, cottage associations and environmentalists, who see declining areas of environmental issues as well.

"In light of the lack of knowledge and understanding of the amount of surface and groundwater supply in Ontario, and in light of the impact of climate change on ground and surface water, the government needs to take a precautionary approach and impose an immediate moratorium for two years on intra-basin transfers in Ontario until regulations can be put in place to limit these transfers.

"The language allowing consumptive use"—and I think Mr. Runciman spoke on this as well a couple of minutes ago—"to lower the amount of intra-basin transfers could mean that amounts greater than 19 megalitres a day could be transferred out of the middle Great Lakes. An intra-basin transfer should be declared 100% consumptive use, with no exceptions."

I go back to my comments, and an area where most of my concerns have come from as the MPP for Simcoe North has been from organizations, like the Georgian Bay Association, that have done phenomenal work in this area across the province and in fact in helping our federal government in federal jurisdictions as well in some of their concerns around the Baird report. They've helped to identify some problems with the declining water levels in the Great Lakes.

It is a serious issue in my riding. I hope the government is listening to these concerns and will take them very, very seriously, because we are seeing record low water levels and there's nothing in sight that would indicate that we'll see any kind of increase in those water levels. It's affecting wetlands. As I mentioned earlier, we're seeing wetlands dry up around Georgian Bay and Lake Huron, and this is completely unacceptable. We have to make sure that these transfers of water are done in a very proper manner so that we will keep the beautiful parts of our province and this great supply of water that we call the Great Lakes intact for many years to come.

Speaker, I just want to thank you for this opportunity. I know my colleague Laurie Scott will be cleaning up the comments in a little while.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** Wow, I've got a whole 24 minutes. I was looking forward to this all afternoon.

I not only want to take this opportunity to speak to this particular motion, but I also want to talk about water in general in regard to policies of the province of Ontario and in regard to permitting around water and water quality as it affects communities across Ontario.

I want to say, first of all, on this particular bill, that what we're attempting to do here, as I said in second reading debate, is not a bad concept. I just want to say up front that I believe a number of concerns I had raised initially in second reading debate are being met. I'm going to have to go back and take a look, for sure, at all of the amendments that came in, but from what I can understand, some of the concerns I had in regard to water that's being drawn from one watershed and then pumped into another, the intermingling of that water—we needed to make sure we had some safeguards, that you don't contaminate other water bodies with what might be various invertebrates or bacteria or whatever might be in the water that would be harmful.

We all know the instances in the Great Lakes, for example, of the issue of ships coming into the St. Lawrence River after we opened up the sea locks on the upper part of the St. Lawrence River past Montreal, which allowed sea-going ships to finally, at one point in the 1960s, come into the Great Lakes. That has had a very disastrous effect on the environment of those Great Lakes because it has allowed various crustaceans and others—I forget what they call them.

**Hon. Caroline Di Cocco (Minister of Culture):** Foreign species.

**Mr. Bisson:** Yes, foreign species, but I'm trying to remember the particular one.

**Hon. Ms. Di Cocco:** Zebra mussels.

**Mr. Bisson:** Zebra mussels. That's right. It allowed zebra mussels and others to cling to the bottom of ships, come across the locks and come into our Great Lakes. It has contaminated our Great Lakes and changed entirely the water system, the environment of the Great Lakes. It has gone beyond that, because now we have the residual effect of having boaters bring their boats into the Great



Lakes—the same type of thing happens on the smaller boats, and we're finding those particular infestations or infiltrations or whatever you want to call them in lakes across Ontario. In fact, we're starting to see them in lakes in northern Ontario.

So that was a concern that I had in debate: I didn't want us to get into a situation where you draw the water from one particular aquifer or one particular water body and then utilize it in order to transfer it into another, unknowingly transferring some sort of micro-organism or whatever that might affect the water overall.

I was listening to the minister earlier, and from what I understand, some of the concerns that I have were raised at committee and apparently there were some amendments done. Again, I want to say for the record that I'll go back and double-check before we actually get to a vote on that particular issue. So that was my concern up front.

The other thing I want to speak to is the whole issue of water itself. Today we just found out, for example, that the water in this building is contaminated by lead. I'm standing here in the Legislature with a glass of water, and I don't know if I should be drinking it, but I figure that I've been drinking it for the last 17 years and I'm still here, so one more glass today is not going to make all that much of a difference. My point is this: We never know when we're at risk. Here we are in the capital of Ontario, in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, a building that was built, yes, over 100 years ago, but which I have always understood to be very well maintained, and because of what we saw happen a couple of weeks ago in a number of communities around Ontario when it comes to lead contamination, the people who look out for the maintenance of this building did testing and they found that the lead levels are a lot higher than what is allowed for consumption. So they're now in a situation of having to ban the use of water for everything from making coffee to drinking, and they're talking about bringing special filtration systems in as an interim measure until we figure out what's going on. My point is that you never know when you could be at risk, and that's why we really need to take our time to do this right.

The other big problem—and we learned this through Walkerton. The system failed in the case of Walkerton, and unfortunately a number of people died. What we learned coming out of that, by way of the inquiry that was held afterwards, was that we needed to do a better job of ensuring that drinking water is handled with special care, because such a fundamental, essential part of the infrastructure of municipalities is to provide water. And we do everything with it. We bathe with it, we wash our clothes in it, we cook with it, we drink it. It's consumed in all kinds of forms. What we've learned is that we need to have laws and we need to have regulations and we need to have policies in place that make sure that water is safe to drink.

The unfortunate reality is that neither the previous government nor this government, quite frankly, allowed the type of funding to happen that would help municipi-

palities meet those particular new standards. There are municipalities across this province that are under a huge financial burden trying to meet the new regulations. I don't believe there's a municipal alderman or mayor or reeve anywhere in this province who is saying, "We don't want to make sure that the drinking water for our families and friends and members of our community is not at risk." But what I'm definitely hearing from a lot of mayors and aldermen and others across the province is that they're okay with the province upping the standard, but if the province is going to up the standard, it has to up the funding.

In fact, the city of Timmins was fined \$80,000 just recently by the Ministry of the Environment for supposedly not being able to follow the water standards. I'm not going to get into all of the details, but part of it is that the city of Timmins has already spent huge amounts of money to upgrade its water plant to meet previous water regulations. We brought in new water regulations, and it was a little bit for naught: They had to go back and re-spend money that they don't have in order to be able to meet the new standards. It's the same story across northern Ontario, as it is across southern Ontario.

I think it's incumbent upon us, as legislators, to say that if, by way of an act of this House or by way of a regulation through cabinet, we're going to up the regulations or the legislation in order to ensure that there's safe drinking water, we need to put our money where our mouth is and we need to provide adequate funding for municipalities to be able to meet those requirements. Yes, there is a fiduciary responsibility on the part of the municipality because it is municipal infrastructure, but I think we need to take a look at what's practical from the perspective of what they can afford. I think the province needs to step in and fill the gap, because what it comes down to—if a municipality has to spend an additional \$2 million or \$5 million or \$10 million to up the standards in its water plant or its sewage treatment plant, you're in a situation where you can't use that capital money to fix streets, fix arenas, fix roofs, fix windows and doors on municipal buildings.

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I was in Kapuskasing last Friday, and that was one of the questions in the schools that I spoke to. I spoke to two different schools, morning and afternoon. That was one of the first questions asked by the students. I thought it was rather interesting. They're saying, "When is the municipality going to fix the roads in Kapuskasing?" I said, "Listen, don't blame Mayor Al Spacek and his council." The problem they have is that they are faced with the burden of having to foot the bill to bring water infrastructure up. When they spend money on water infrastructure, they don't have the money to spend on road infrastructure and they don't have the money to do the kind of repairs that they would like to do to their municipal buildings, such as the pool or the arena.

Municipal councils, in this particular case the town of Kapuskasing, are undergoing a huge investment. I think the provincial government for having listened to us and



provided some money to assist us with the rebuilding of a water tower and a water main. Still, it's a huge expense on the part of the municipality because the money that the province gives doesn't equal the amount of money that that project is going to cost. As a result, the municipality has to spend money that they would normally use for other projects in order to deal with the water situation in Kapuskasing. It's a story across the north.

I'm just saying to the members of the Legislature today: I really think that as we move legislative initiatives through the House, we need to take a look at the financial consequences for both municipalities, the taxpayer—being us, the people who pay the taxes, and whomever else—so that we're at least in a position of being responsible about what we're asking people to do.

The other thing I want to talk about, and again, this is something you've heard me talk about on a number of occasions, is the issue of infrastructure in First Nations. There's this great game that's played, and the game is called "Pass the buck," when it comes to the responsibility for infrastructure in First Nations. We always hear it's the same.

When we had the tragedy in Kashechewan two years ago, unfortunately it took children becoming ill and having their pictures taken and coming here to Queen's Park and holding a press conference showing the pictures of those kids before governments took action. As a result of that, first of all, this provincial government, as requested by myself and Chief Leo Friday and Charlie Angus, declared a state of emergency that allowed other things to happen, which was not only to evacuate the community but force the federal government to start to deal with the water situation in Kashechewan. Because for months—I would say, for years—the community of Kashechewan has been complaining both to the federal and provincial governments that the water quality in their community was substandard. Nothing was happening. Every now and then, somebody went up to do some testing. There may have been some money spent on the water plant, but clearly the type of training that was needed to train the water plant operators to make sure that they could properly run the water plant and to make sure that the basic infrastructure worked properly wasn't being done. As a result, people got sick.

My point is this: We end up in a situation always with First Nations where the province says, "We did our bit. We declared the state of emergency and we forced the federal government to fix the water plant." In fact, the federal government did fix the water plant in Kashechewan, and today you can drink the water out of the taps. But the point is this: These people are Ontario citizens. I don't think it's good enough for us as Ontario legislators and for the province of Ontario to say, "They're a federal responsibility."

We do a lot when it comes to services in First Nations communities. In most of the communities, we're responsible for health care. It's a provincial responsibility. The only place that it's not is in my riding. We have the last federal hospital that is currently being transferred to the

province of Ontario, and sometime soon we will have the entire health system of First Nations under provincial control. We're responsible for all of the welfare costs, all of the social assistance costs within those communities. We're responsible for daycare. We're responsible for a number of services that we provide in First Nations communities.

All I'm saying is this: We've got to stop passing the buck and saying that water infrastructure, housing, roads are strictly a federal responsibility, because as long as we continue to do that, First Nations will never get a fair shake. I'll say it here and I'll say it loud and I've said it publicly: The federal government is incompetent when it comes to its responsibility towards First Nations. I know that my good friend Mr. Bartolucci and others have had an opportunity to travel into those First Nations communities only have to look at the condition of those communities to find out to what degree this federal government is irresponsible and, quite frankly, has dropped the ball when it comes to the health and safety of those communities.

If you go into a community like Pikangikum, a community like Big Trout Lake, into Kashechewan, into Attawapiskat, Fort Albany—it doesn't matter which community you go into; Moose Factory, Moosonee even, which is a municipality but that's a whole other story—people are having to live 20 to 25 people per house. How does a child study in that situation? We ask ourselves, why is there such a high dropout rate with the kids within the primary and secondary systems on First Nations reserves? Well, how do you study with 20 to 25 people in a house? You can't. So the kid drops out. And the dropout rate in some communities at the primary school level is as high as 60% by the end of the year. How do you build capacity in those communities to develop the leadership that we're going to need in those communities to take over the responsibility of running those communities? Where do you find the water plant operator, where do you find the person who is responsible for services within the schools and within the band offices if we don't have kids rising to their potential through the school system?

I want to say, there are a lot of kids out there in First Nations communities who are doing quite well and a lot of parents are really trying hard. But it's pretty hard when you've got bad infrastructure. My point is that we need to, as a province, take the responsibility of saying, "We will, as the provincial government, sit down with First Nations and with the federal government and enter into an agreement that we're going to accelerate the construction of housing and other infrastructure in First Nations communities. And we, the province, are prepared to put our money where our mouth is."

I tell you that if I were the government tomorrow, that's one of the things that I would do, because I think it's unconscionable to allow people to live in the squalor and condition that we see in those First Nations communities.

The other thing I would talk about—I would be sitting down with First Nations and with the federal government



to say, "Let's put in place the type of funding that we need in order to not only rebuild housing that exists, but to build new housing over a period that's reasonable so that people can have some hope of knowing they're going to be in their own house and they're not going to have to live 20 to 25 people per house."

But then you've got to go beyond there. We need to make sure that the water plants, the sewage treatment plants and the distribution systems in all those communities work. You know as well as I do, my good friend Mr. Bartolucci, that most of the communities, 60% of them, don't have adequate water. In Ontario, 60% of aboriginal communities don't have adequate water. Their plants don't meet the minimum requirement that we have in the province of Ontario, and you don't have to go far. You just go north of Highway 11 and south of Highway 11, and 60% of the communities basically don't have water to the standard that's required in the province of Ontario. The same holds true for reserves in southern Ontario.

I just say, they're Ontario citizens, and for us to say, "Oh, well, we don't have jurisdiction so we can't go in there and do anything"—I think we have a responsibility to say to the federal government, and I'll say it again, "You're incompetent. You're not doing a good job. You've been responsible for reserves for 100 years. You've dropped the ball; 60% of communities don't have drinking water."

We want to be part of the solution, and we propose that they fall under provincial jurisdiction when it comes to water quality. We will enter into negotiations with the federal government and First Nations in order to develop the kind of funding that we need over a period that's responsible, both for the communities and for us as governments, to put in place the water systems that we need and the sewage systems that we need, and to make sure that the roads are working and all other infrastructure is in place.

You walk into any First Nation community, I would say almost all, and you walk into a band office—normally a band office, just for people to understand, is a local government. In the city of Timmins or Sudbury, we have municipal town halls or city halls. If you go into Sudbury city hall or Timmins city hall, or you go into Thunder Bay or Toronto, they've got pretty good digs. They have offices that function. They've got toilets that work. They've got winter doors that keep the cold out. They've got windows that keep the cold out and roofs that keep the water out when it rains. You've got computer systems. You have that in all those communities. You go into a band office and, I've got to tell you, it's disgraceful that we in the province of Ontario allow those civil workers, who are band employees, to work in the conditions they do: phone systems that don't work; doors that don't work; windows that leak air in the winter; roofs that leak; band offices that are condemned and contaminated with mould. It's horrendous. I say this because we cannot allow the federal government to continue doing what it's doing to those First Nations communities.

So I say that one of the things we need to do is sit down with First Nations leadership, we need to sit down with the federal government, and we have to work out a plan on infrastructure renewal that will accelerate the reconstruction of those communities. I want to say this on that point: There are those, such as Mr. Pope in his report, who would argue that the simple solution is to move all those First Nations community members into communities like Timmins or Thunder Bay. And you know what? I'll tell you, it probably would be cheaper. I'm the first to admit it. But it would be total assimilation of a people, and on that basis, we can't allow it to happen.

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I said to people in Kashechewan, as I said to people across northern Ontario who talked to me about it when the issue was raised—because with Kashechewan, it would cost about \$400 million to relocate that community. That's just one community of around 1,200 people. That's a lot of money. The suggestion was made by the Pope report that we basically say to those community members, "We'll provide you a house somewhere in Timmins or Smooth Rock Falls, provided everybody moves, and we'll pay your moving costs."

I said to them, "Well, you know what? There's probably around 50% of the community, if you're lucky, who might take that as an option. But what do you do if 50% or 60% or 20% decide to stay? Do you send in the army? Do you forcibly evict the rest of the people there?" It's totally impractical. You cannot evict people from where they've been living all their lives, because (a) that's where they live, and (b) it's their traditional territory. Yes, some people may want to leave, and you allow that to happen. That's everybody's choice. One of the basic, fundamental principles of our Constitution is the freedom of movement, to live where we want. If somebody in Kashechewan, or anywhere, wants to live outside of their community, that's their choice and we should respect that. But for those who stay, we need to make sure that those communities are whole.

I would say that we need to be very serious about sitting down and making this a top priority for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and First Nations and that we don't just pay lip service to it, that the Ontario government takes a clear stand. Basically, we should pass a motion in this House to that effect: that we, along with First Nations, will sit down over a five- or 10-year period to renew the entire infrastructure of those First Nations communities. That will be a big-ticket item, but I see it as a human rights issue.

I would just ask anybody who's watching today, or in replay, or any member of this Legislature who thinks I'm wrong, to pack up your bags and go live in a First Nations community, one of those remote communities, for a week. Bring your families with you. I want you to live in the conditions that these people have to live in. Send your kids to the schools that are contaminated, full of mould. Go up to Fort Severn. Go into Attawapiskat. Find out what the condition is. Live in a house with 20 or



25 people. Go buy food at the Northern Store that's three and four times the price that you pay anywhere else. Be in a situation where there's no employment and all you can live on is welfare. Then come back and look me in the face and say, "Oh, well, we don't need to do this." I'm convinced that for anybody who goes there and lives there for a week with their family, their kids are going to be screaming at mom and dad, saying, "How can you allow this to happen?"

I just say this is something that we should undertake. So my basic point that I make on that, as I move on to another issue, is that it's a question of fairness. I think it's a question of recognizing, as Ontarians, that First Nations are, first of all, a nation unto themselves, but they are also members of this provincial home that we call the province of Ontario. As such, I think we need to give them the respect that they deserve and to help them to fulfill what needs to be done in those communities so they at least can have basic infrastructure.

I want to end on one last point in regard to this issue, in regard to the First Nations, and that is the issue of education, and just very quickly put it out there. Again, it's one of those things where the federal government is probably trying to do the right thing but is not succeeding very well at running the school systems on those reserves. One of the things that I would be very interested in is if we were seriously to look at, over a period of time, developing legislation in this province that would allow First Nations to create their own school boards that would fall under provincial jurisdiction. They would have to meet provincial guidelines as far as the school curriculum and all that, based on the Cree language or the Ojibway language or whatever language it is that they use, but the idea would be that they be given the time and they be given the resources to develop their own school boards that would fall under the provincial Ministry of Education.

The basic problem we have is that those schools are isolate schools in each of the communities. The federal government does not have the capacity to run the school system. Ontario and all provinces are responsible for education. We don't only have school boards, but we also have the Ministry of Education that has all of the expertise needed to run schools. Our kids, by and large, succeed in our school system. Why? Because we have competent people at the board level who run those schools and run them according to provincial guidelines.

The problem we have in First Nations communities is that you have competent people running schools, but you don't have a federal government that really knows what needs to be done in education. They look at each community individually; they don't look at the education system in First Nations communities as a whole. So I say what we should be doing is developing legislation that allows First Nations to choose to develop their own school boards under provincial jurisdiction so that they can teach the kids in their own language.

Why should a young Cree child be taught English in kindergarten or spoken to in English in kindergarten

when that child is Cree or Ojibwa? Allow them to do as we do as francophones: to develop their school system within their own language. If that child feels comfortable and is learning in an environment that he or she understands, nurtured by their own language and nurtured by their own cultural identities and values, those children will stand tall and proud, more so than even today, and they will be able to function much better in the future. That would be the long-term solution. It's not going to change things for us today in our generation, but at least the next generation would have a chance of being able to break the cycle that we've created.

I end on that particular point. I appreciate the opportunity to have spoken, and I know that members have taken to heart some of the comments that I made. I look forward to the day that we finally do get some fairness and respect for those people who live in our First Nations communities.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I just want to comment. I have great respect for the member from Leeds-Grenville. We were together in committee on May 16. One of the things he raised today is the issue of consumptive use. I want to note that I did call upon legal counsel. Mr. Flagal was there at committee that morning. He was legal counsel to the Ministry of the Environment. He responded that the definition of consumptive use was something that was consistent between the agreements that we've entered into with the eight Great Lakes states and the two Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec. I just want to note that I specifically asked Mr. Flagal the question, and I will give his response:

"When we were given instructions to develop this particular legislation, the instructions were to make sure to enshrine in the legislation the commitments of the province and the commitments of the parties to the agreement"—i.e. the province of Quebec and the eight Great Lakes states—"and that's why you see this definition of consumptive use."

That's why it tracks very closely to what was agreed upon by the eight Great Lakes states and the other provinces. He continues on to clearly articulate why this definition of consumptive use was placed in this piece of legislation.

I also called upon Ms. Leith Hunter, the deputy director of legal services for the branch in the Ministry of Natural Resources. She acted as counsel to the government of Ontario during the negotiations of the agreement. The Minister of Natural Resources did mention in his remarks the context of the agreement. Ms. Hunter did go on to say that, again, the definition of consumptive use had to be consistent with what was agreed to by the eight Great Lakes states and the province of Quebec and did go on to clearly define it.

I'm pleased that the member from Leeds-Grenville raised the issue. I took it, at committee that morning, on May 16, to be a very important point, so I did refer that issue to both the counsel for the Ministry of the Environment and the counsel for the Ministry of Natural Resources. In the natural resources case, Ms. Hunter was



eminently qualified to comment, because she had been the key counsel at the negotiation table when the accord was put together in 2005 between the eight Great Lakes states and the two provinces.

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo–Wellington):** I'm pleased to have a moment to speak to this bill at third reading, Bill 198. Unfortunately, because of the fact that this bill has been time-allocated by this government, which promised never to time-allocate legislation—in opposition, they used to complain about time allocation motions all the time. I recall those days quite vividly. Yet this bill, Bill 198, is time-allocated, so there is limited time for those of us in opposition who are concerned about this issue. So I will be brief.

1730

I want to say that I believe it's incumbent upon the government and all of us to protect our groundwater for future generations, and I believe the Ministry of the Environment must take its responsibility for approving water-taking permits very seriously. In my opinion, no water-taking permit should be approved unless hydrogeological and scientific studies prove that groundwater resources will not be depleted as a result of the approval of the application and neighbouring wells will not be negatively impacted. The Ministry of the Environment, in my view, should carefully monitor large-volume water users to ensure that they are not exceeding the quantity of water that they're permitted to draw because of their permit, and if they are taking more water than they are allowed, their permits should be revoked.

The government should examine the feasibility and practicality of designating plastic water bottles under the waste diversion program if recycling rates do not improve significantly. Making the bottles refillable should even be considered, in my view. As well, the government should consult with the industry on setting a royalty fee which would be paid to municipalities that have water-bottling plants within their boundaries, similar to what exists for the extraction of gravel.

In my area, in Wellington county, there are at least two large water-bottling plants, one in the town of Erin and one in the township of Puslinch, and there is a great deal of community concern about whether or not water-taking permits should be extended and approved. Certainly I'm interested in this issue and want to do what I can to ensure that the public interest is upheld with respect to this issue.

I will be supporting the bill, but I'm also hoping that the Minister of the Environment will arrange a briefing for me very soon so that I can make sure that I'm completely brought up to speed on all of the issues surrounding these water-taking permit applications. I look forward to the minister arranging that briefing as soon as possible.

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** We've had many members today from our side of the House who have wanted to speak to Bill 198. As was mentioned by the member from Waterloo–Wellington, there was a time allocation, so we only have such a

limited amount of time. I was happy that they all participated and that I'm doing the cleanup on Bill 198, Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act, 2007.

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** They saved the best for the last.

**Ms. Scott:** I'll take that as a compliment from the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

It's been brought up that we intend to support the bill, but we certainly have some reservations and some amendments that we brought forward to committee that did not get passed. This act does provide for the "conservation, protection and management of Ontario's waters" and for their "efficient and sustainable use" in order to promote Ontario's long-term social, economic and environmental well-being.

We all want to protect our water sources. We had many people come before committee who knew about the bill. The problem again was that not a lot of people knew about the bill. The hearings were just held in Toronto here. Certainly the bill affects all of Ontario. It would have been nicer to see a little more time taken, especially on the water-taking aspect of the bill.

There were two parts to the bill. The Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Natural Resources both spoke here this afternoon. We had even said in committee that really there should be two parts to the bill, because we heard from quite a few stakeholders that they hadn't been consulted—the water-taking permit being the Ministry of the Environment and the protection of the water basin aspect being the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Tim Morris from the Sierra Club pointed this out when he said that "there is still a lot of work to be done in regulations following this legislation to further define and implement the wording of the legislation." This would be much better served in two pieces of legislation, which we thought should go on.

Consumptive use has been brought up a lot this afternoon. The member from Leeds–Grenville was quite concerned for the company in his riding, Invista. I know the member from Peterborough and I had lengthy conversations in committee about the definition of "consumptive use." We stand to have philosophical differences, which I appreciate. I know that we had some clarification. The fact that some of the states may interpret the definition differently and lead to an uneven playing field and competition is still a concern, but something we could possibly, hopefully, work out in regulation. But we appreciate the two sides of the argument that did occur there.

Some other concerns that were brought up, not just at committee but by the Environmental Commissioner before the committee, were that the MOE and the MNR said that funding for both ministries is inadequate for them to fully operate and fulfill their obligations and their functions. I know that Premier McGuinty campaigned on making the environment a major priority, but we had the Environmental Commissioner say that there's not enough



funding. We had several stakeholders say, "Well, that's all nice. You're doing this bill, and if there's no money to go with it to make it work, it's not going to work." So there's quite the dichotomy between what the government says and what's actually going to happen. That was brought up by several stakeholders.

Rick Findlay, the director of Pollution Probe, said with respect to Bill 198—and this goes in line with the concerns of the Environmental Commissioner—"Another important requirement is to be able to make the case for the resources necessary to implement this legislation over time, and the Environmental Commissioner has recently noted the chronic underfunding of the ministries responsible for managing and cleaning up the Great Lakes, the ministries of the environment and natural resources, in particular." Even properly intended legislation cannot be implemented without adequate resources.

There's no escaping those facts. We brought forward amendments from several groups. The Georgian Bay Association was spoken about at great length by the members from Parry Sound-Muskoka and Simcoe North. We're pleased that the government did listen to some of their concerns and made some amendments to that bill. They've done a great job, standing up for the Georgian Bay Association, working with Mary Muter and her group and the concerns with transfer within water basins, not just watersheds. So I appreciate that the government has listened to that. There's always the devil in the details with many of the regulations that were brought forward. So I thank all the members for voicing their concerns about that, and the Georgian Bay Association has done great work too.

The federation of agriculture is certainly one of the voices of Ontario farmers and is very important to my riding of Haliburton-Victoria-Brock, which is very dependent on a strong and successful agriculture sector, as is all of Ontario. Mr. Don McCabe, who's an executive member of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, stated in the committee: "We are pleased that this bill recognizes the substantial stewardship role Ontario's agricultural producers take to minimize their water use and ensure an efficient use of water by recognizing that conservation charges will not apply to primary production."

I certainly agree that Ontario farmers are leading examples of land stewardship in the province of Ontario. The Farmers Feed Cities campaign was launched to educate everyone why we need to keep a strong agriculture sector that can provide safe, sure, high-quality foods to us and also that they are great stewards of the land. I thank them for that campaign. They were also concerned—again, back to the "consumptive use" definition—and felt that significant public research needs to be conducted on that. I say that again as a reminder to the government that that definition is going to be coming up a lot as regulations to this bill go through.

Another point I'd like to put forward on the record pertains to the absolute need for our farmers to have uninterrupted access to water for the very life of crops.

Many farmers use storage ponds to alleviate the stress on other water sources during irrigation. The OFA's recommendation, which the PC Party brought forward in a proposed amendment, would see that the bill recognized the beneficial management practices of the OFA. Unfortunately, it was rejected by the government. But let me quote Mr. McCabe again:

"If you're going to make that kind of an investment into that crop, you need to be able to ensure that the water's going to be there to nurture that crop to its fullest potential.... We get one shot a year to do it right, and if that crop dies on the vine, that's a long time to come back around."

We wanted the government to take what the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has said. They didn't. I don't want them to throw any more stumbling blocks at our farmers in our agriculture communities than are already out there for the agricultural sector. I hope that, as this wasn't addressed in legislation, it will be addressed in the regulations as they come down.

The government did allow one of our amendments to pass. I want to thank the members of the justice policy committee for seeing that that was removed, and that was the provision that the permits expire, even if applied for on time, if a year passes by. That was in respect to farmers who have followed the rules, have applied on time for water-taking permits, and who should not be hurt because they have not had an answer back, the government being too slow to respond to that. So we were pleased that the government said that amendment could go through.

1740

I spoke before about the Georgian Bay Association and the good work they have done. They themselves actually raised a significant amount of money, undertook a study and found that 2.5 billion gallons per day, which was a previously unknown diversion, had been taken out of the St. Clair River, leading to the current low water levels in Lake Huron, Lake Michigan and Georgian Bay. I think it's just astounding that they took that task on themselves, raised the money and found that diversion that had been unaccounted for before. That is certainly why that amendment—we brought through a similar amendment, but the Liberals passed their own amendment. It dealt with the watersheds and returning the water to the same watershed. So we appreciate the work done by them.

The member from Leeds-Grenville brought forward his concerns on the consumptive use and the loss of jobs in his riding that could occur because of the definition of that, and the company that's willing to pay for the use of water but not for the water they're returning right to the same source for their business. Again, it's not an incentive for industry to move to the province if they don't know the rules and if they're scared they are going to change before them, and we certainly don't need any more loss of manufacturing jobs.

The Canadian Bottled Water Association, another provider of many jobs in our province, stated in public



hearings, "We were not consulted by the Ministry of the Environment as they developed the \$3.71 fee level.... We believe that this bill has more to do with politics than environmental science or stewardship. The timing and handling of the bill through the legislative process does not invite proper scrutiny or analysis." So another major association contradicts any attempt made by the minister for proper consultation to take place on this bill.

Mr. Anthony van Heyningen of Refreshments Canada says, "I know that neither Refreshments Canada nor our members were consulted prior to the introduction of this bill.... We are further disappointed that the government has moved time allocation on this bill."

Again, that section of the bill was rammed through without the consultation to take place that should have allowed citizens to come forward and more study to be done, because a lot of people didn't know about Bill 198, and it takes a lot of energy, time and work to get into the details of what it would actually mean to you.

This is another group of people coming forward saying that it should have been split in two. There could be a constitutional challenge on this. I guess we're going to have to wait and see.

Bill 198 also has the obligation to report; the agreement was every five years. Pollution Probe brought forward a suggestion that there needs to be more transparency and better monitoring, and reporting annually. Unfortunately, that amendment did not get through.

The Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association also provided an amendment that we brought forward that dealt with safety from electrical dangers in working underground with the water and the water level in the ditches. The government said it was not a concern and they didn't pass that amendment, but I just wanted to put on the record that they had brought forward a concern that they saw within the bill, and we're disappointed the government did not act on that.

Unfortunately, I'm running out of time, but we've had as much debate as we're allotted here.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Scott:** There's unanimous consent for an extension, I hear in the background? There's a limited amount of time for debate, and I appreciate the opportunity that I've had. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker:** Pursuant to the order of the House dated April 24, 2007, I am now required to put the question.

Ms. Broten has moved third reading of Bill 198, An Act to amend the Ontario Water Resources Act to safeguard and sustain Ontario's water, to make related amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 and to repeal the Water Transfer Control Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. There will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1745 to 1746.*

**The Acting Speaker:** I've just received this:

"To the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly:

"Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the motion by Minister Broten for third reading of Bill 198, An Act to amend the Ontario Water Resources Act to safeguard and sustain Ontario's water, to make related amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 and to repeal the Water Transfer Control Act, be deferred until the time of deferred votes on May 31, 2007."

It is signed by the chief government whip.

In view of this, it will be deferred.

Orders of the day.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker:** Shall the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands recessed until 6:45 this evening.

*The House adjourned at 1747.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

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Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament



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Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

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**Journal  
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**Wednesday 30 May 2007**

**Mercredi 30 mai 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 30 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 30 mai 2007

*The House met at 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### STRENGTHENING BUSINESS THROUGH A SIMPLER TAX SYSTEM ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 VISANT À RENFORCER LES ENTREPRISES GRÂCE À UN RÉGIME FISCAL PLUS SIMPLE

Mr. Chan, on behalf of Mr. Sorbara, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 174, An Act to enact the Taxation Act, 2007 and make complementary and other amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 174, Loi édictant la Loi de 2007 sur les impôts et apportant des modifications complémentaires et autres à diverses lois.

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Speaker: I seek unanimous consent that, notwithstanding the order of the House dated May 9, the vote on third reading of Bill 174 may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h).

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** "Will be deferred" or "may be deferred"?

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** "May be deferred."

**Mr. Marchese:** I thought that it will be deferred.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** Yes, at the time of the vote, you'd have the division and have—

**Interjection:** So it's going to be deferred.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** It's going to be deferred.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Do we have this all settled now so that we have unanimous consent? Agreed? Agreed.

The Minister of Revenue has moved third reading of Bill 174. The Minister of Revenue.

**Hon. Michael Chan (Minister of Revenue):** Businesses in Ontario have asked for a simpler tax system, and the McGuinty government has listened. Bill 174, Strengthening Business through a Simpler Tax System Act, 2007, would make compliance with Ontario corporate tax laws easier and less costly, and that's what my ministry aims for: helping our clients meet their tax obligations in the most effective way. I think we are making great strides toward that goal with Bill 174.

I am so pleased to be speaking to this bill today for third reading. I think we have witnessed government efficiencies at work here. This is an excellent example of

effective government. We have adapted to the changing needs and demands of the people of Ontario and are well on the way to passing a bill that will streamline tax administration in this province. That's an accomplishment I take great pride in, not only as the Minister of Revenue but also as a former businessman.

It is also beneficial for businesses to keep tax administration down to the basics. Bill 174 achieves this. In short, Ontario businesses would benefit from a single tax form, a single tax collector and a single set of income tax rules.

Today, I would like to emphasize once again how Bill 174 would help the businesses of this province by expanding opportunities and strengthening our economy.

Bill 174 creates a new single piece of legislation, combining the Corporate Tax Act and Income Tax Act into the Taxation Act, 2007.

I would like to highlight some of the benefits of this bill. By moving to one set of tax forms, one tax administration and one set of rules, Ontario businesses would save time and money—up to \$100 million annually in compliance costs. Businesses will save a further \$90 million a year in Ontario income tax from a harmonized income tax base. The total amount of legislation and regulations will be cut by more than half, streamlining Ontario corporate and personal tax provisions.

The business community has spoken, and we have responded.

What this bill comes down to is one government administering corporate taxes in Ontario. If passed, it will reduce compliance costs for businesses, enable the Canada Revenue Agency to streamline services and reduce administration costs, making it simple.

## 1850

And less is more. Less paperwork, less overlap, less time and less money spent on unnecessary duplication equals more opportunity, more capacity, more time and more money for businesses to grow and thrive. As businesses spend less time on paperwork, they can begin to spend more time doing what they do best: creating jobs and fostering a strong economy.

That's what our government is helping to do: creating a competitive environment for Ontario's businesses. We are making positive changes that will help build a vigorous economy that will benefit all Ontarians.

With our fourth budget, presented by the Honourable Greg Sorbara, Minister of Finance, on March 22, 2007, we left behind the deficits that we inherited and entered into a new era of balanced budgets and sustainable services. This is a new era, an opportunity for us to become



an even stronger Ontario and, in turn, to strengthen businesses in Ontario.

The 2007 budget proposes more measures to simplify tax compliance and administration and to support corporate income tax base harmonization, a move that complements the position of Bill 174.

In the budget, we proposed a variety of measures that speak, as does this bill, to our commitment to provide a strong business climate, including reducing high business education tax rates by \$540 million, which will benefit more than half a million businesses in 321 municipalities across the province; and providing more than \$2 million to the Canadian Youth Business Foundation, which helps young Canadians create their own successful businesses.

In addition, to help support a strong, dynamic and globally competitive business environment in Ontario, the 2007 budget also includes significant investment in electricity infrastructure; significant initiatives as part of a \$1.7-billion investment over five years, to 2009-10, in research and innovation; the establishment of a new Ontario Manufacturing Council; enhancements to certain entertainment industry tax credits; and significant measures supporting Ontario's tourism, entertainment and creative industries.

The McGuinty government recognizes that every area of a vibrant business sector adds to the success of Ontario, and that's exactly what Bill 174 does.

Our government has consulted with businesses and made improvements to this bill, confirming our commitment to deliver positive change for the people of Ontario.

We are accelerating the elimination of capital tax. This tax will now be gone by July 1, 2010, freeing up money to invest and grow Ontario's businesses.

And we have gone further: We are extending the apprenticeship training tax credit by four years. Our government sees the growing demand for skilled labour, and we are helping to meet that demand.

Businesses can invest in the future with the support of the McGuinty government. We can see the opportunity for us to become an even stronger Ontario, and we are acting on those possibilities.

Our government also recognizes the importance of research and development in creating a competitive business environment. This was the first government to create a ministry dedicated entirely to encouraging research and innovation in Ontario. Our continuing commitment to R&D is reflected in this bill. We have created a new R&D tax credit that would continue our support for research and development in Ontario.

These are just a few examples of the way our government continues to deliver results for businesses in Ontario. That's how my ministry and the McGuinty government work for Ontario. By consulting with key stakeholders, we are able to deliver measurable results that meet the needs of our businesses and our province. And I think we all recognize that strong businesses mean more jobs and a stronger economy for all the people of Ontario.

This government is committed to building a vibrant and competitive economy for our businesses, but we also

recognize that this will mean change for the government too. We understand that with the passage of this bill, some people who are now working for us would be working for the federal government.

Change is not always easy, and I applaud the staff at my ministry for embracing these changes and continuing to provide excellent service to the people of Ontario. The memorandum of agreement signed in October 2006 with the federal government acknowledges the skills and expertise Ontario staff would bring to the CRA.

The people who work for the Ministry of Revenue are a priority, and we will continue to meet all our obligations to those employees. Negotiators for the ministry are working with the federal government to obtain the best human resources agreement possible for our employees. We will continue to assist affected staff and work with the bargaining agent representatives to help ensure a smooth and transparent process.

As is always the way, for some stakeholders, change can't happen soon enough. Business owners have told us they do not want to wait until 2009 to start realizing the benefits of Bill 174, and once again our government has answered. Businesses want to realize compliance cost savings as soon as they can, and so do we. So our ministry and the Canada Revenue Agency are working together to save businesses time and money by integrating some administration processes for taxation years prior to 2009. This is good news for business owners in Ontario and another example of the great work the McGuinty government has done for our province. We look forward to the benefits of these cost savings as soon as possible, once human resources and transition agreements are completed.

Bill 174 is a good-news bill for Ontario businesses and proof of the positive changes that can be achieved when governments work together. We are proud of the progress we have made in our bid for fairness from the federal government on behalf of the people of Ontario. But our work does not end here.

This bill helps to build a continued productive working relationship with the federal government, and it is in our mutual best interests to work well together. A strong Ontario benefits Canada. Building on our successes will help build a better, more competitive Ontario and Canada.

The Strengthening Business through a Simpler Tax System Act, 2007, is a major step forward in providing a more competitive business environment to achieve a stronger and more prosperous Ontario.

I now ask the honourable members for their support for Bill 174 so that we can enhance Ontario's business climate and expand opportunity for all.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I'm pleased to respond. Unfortunately, another night, another time allocation motion by the Dalton McGuinty government, ramming through legislation once again. Almost 100% of their bills these last few weeks have been time-allocated. So you know they're anxious to get out of here as fast as



possible. They're tired of questions in the Legislature. So we find ourselves with a mere 20 minutes to address Bill 174.

I enjoyed listening to the comments of the honourable Minister of Revenue, Minister Chan. I do want to note that we in the official opposition were very curious when the new Ministry of Revenue was created by the Dalton McGuinty government, I think in record time. Congratulations to the minister. He was an MPP for a mere, what, three days—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Hudak:** Two days, I hear from my colleagues across the way—and elevated to the status of Minister of Revenue. No doubt many members who had been elected in 2003 or previously who were not cabinet ministers probably looked sideways, thinking they had worked many long hours, put in many long weekends, many nights in the Legislature, and were passed over for an individual who had been an MPP for merely two days. No doubt there was probably a little bit of discussion in the Liberal caucus room.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Hudak:** No? Everybody thought this was the right thing to do, eh?

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The minister has some strong background in business. I know he had worked hard for his nomination. I just find it rather passing strange that many able members of the Liberal benches found that a two-day rookie had been put into cabinet just—

**Interjection:** That happened to you in 1995.

**Mr. Hudak:** It didn't happen to me in 1995, no. But it's nice of you to say.

What was also very interesting was the creation of the Ministry of Revenue. This is a golden oldie of a ministry, right? When the minister finally found his offices, he probably found an Olivetti typewriter on his desk, all kinds of carbon paper, likely a rotary telephone, and the old copy machine—what were those things called again? They had purplish ink that you could smell. I remember doing that in elementary school, if you wanted an interesting distraction and to improve your mood quickly.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** You're not old enough to remember that.

**Interjection:** Do you remember those days?

**Mr. Hudak:** I do remember those days.

When the minister finally found his date stamp there in the ministry, it had a date, likely, of February 3, 1993. Do you know why I say that? Because that was the last time there was a Minister of Revenue in the province of Ontario. The minister at that time? An interesting trivia question for the members.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** It was a long time ago.

**Mr. Hudak:** I know; it was a long time ago. The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal was barely out of elementary school at the time, I suspect, back in 1993, the last time we had a Minister of Revenue.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Hudak:** No. The end of the Ministry of Revenue came as a result of that legendary cost-cutter Bob Rae. Bob Rae axed the Ministry of Revenue as a redundant and unnecessary ministry; the legendary cost-cutter, the legendary budget-balancer, so to speak, Bob Rae, back when he was simply a closet Liberal as opposed to a card-carrying member of the Liberal Party.

I will remind members of the assembly that the last Minister of Revenue—we didn't have toonies at this point in time; we had loonies, I guess.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** Shirley Martin.

**Mr. Hudak:** No, it wasn't Shirley. God bless Shirley Martin, the federal member for the Grimsby area, for Lincoln, at the time. She was a cabinet minister under Brian Mulroney. So, no. It was close: It was Shelley Wark-Martyn. The Honourable Shelley Wark-Martyn was the last Minister of Revenue in the halcyon days of 1993 when the legendary cost-cutter Bob Rae said it was a redundant ministry. Dalton McGuinty dusted this golden oldie off like some Frankie Avalon 45 and brought it back into vogue, I guess, to recognize his newly elected member from Markham.

I'm not sure where the minister's office is. I did have a suggestion at one point in time. The appropriate place for the Ministry of Revenue would be in the Whitney tower. The Whitney tower, of course, was mothballed some time ago, like the Ministry of Revenue itself. I thought it would be an appropriate location, although the Whitney tower has been mothballed for some 39 years and the Ministry of Revenue only for 14.

Do you know what? Maybe they were going to be serious about this ministry. If I were the minister, by the way, and Dalton McGuinty gave me that call and said, "You've been a member for two days. You've been very impressive. We're going to put you in cabinet," I think I would have asked for one of the existing ministries. With no disrespect to my colleagues across the floor—they certainly would not be included in this list—there have been some underperformers in the Liberal cabinet. I'm not naming names, and certainly the exceptions are staring across the floor at me right now. So you'd think the Minister of Revenue, the member from Markham, would have gone into one of the existing ministries instead of creating this golden oldie of a ministry anew, but unfortunately a new ministry started.

I said, "Okay. Let's check this out. Let's actually see what's happening in the Ministry of Revenue." So I went to their website tonight—fresh, hot off the press, so to speak; electronically, of course. We said, "Let's see what they have on the minister's website for speeches." You click on "Speeches"—2007, obviously; the only applicable year, because in 1993 they probably didn't have a website for the Ministry of Revenue. We checked the month of—this was created in April, March, February? Anyway, we checked each month in 2007, and not a single speech was listed for the Ministry of Revenue. Not a single speech was listed on the Ministry of Revenue website from the time it was created. I said, "Okay, maybe there haven't been speeches worth posting on the



website. How about press releases?" Again, you click on 2007, look for each and every month, and there's not a single press release on the Ministry of Revenue website. So maybe unlike some other ministers who like to announce a website a day, or a minister who has been known to announce and re-announce the adventures of Brad Graham in claiming a certain trophy in Philadelphia and bringing it back home—and good for Mr. Graham.

Anyway, we will follow the adventures of the Ministry of Revenue with a close eye, but it seems, in many senses, a ministry created that actually isn't doing too much. We fear that this was simply the creation of another post for profile purposes, as opposed to actually investing taxpayer dollars wisely. Maybe we'll see a change in that. Maybe we'll go to the website tomorrow and we'll see, at 8 a.m., a new speech on there from the minister, or a press release, but after many months not a single one has shown up on that website, sadly.

Bill 174—as I said, it's disappointing that we are once again facing a time allocation motion this evening. What was rather interesting—Mr. Speaker, you may recall—is that during committee, actually, my colleague for Beaches–East York had shown that the number of motions was greater than the entire number of pages in the bill. This is an incredible accomplishment. I don't know how that's possible, that they would actually have motions that outnumbered the number of pages in the actual legislation. Maybe you're writing or rewriting the bill on several occasions, but that certainly gives pause to the competence of those who were drafting the original legislation.

We do support its purpose. As I said, I commended the minister on bringing it forward; I commended the previous minister, Minister Flaherty, on initiating the process. The Progressive Conservative caucus is supporting Bill 174. We're disappointed, nonetheless, that it's being rammed through with a time allocation motion.

We do look forward, as we watch with a very close eye, very rapt attention, to the future productivity of the minister and the Ministry of Revenue to see if it's actually about doing work or simply creating another cabinet position, a driver and staff.

**Mr. Marchese:** I'm not going to take the whole time.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** Aww.

**Mr. Marchese:** I could, and sometimes I enjoy it, as you know. I was about to welcome people to this political program—it's 7:10; we're on, live, Wednesday night—but it's not that kind of an issue today to do that. People can go back and watch some other—is hockey on tonight?

**Mr. Hudak:** Yes, at 8 o'clock.

**Mr. Marchese:** It's starting at 8 o'clock, is it? Because I'm not into—if it was a soccer game, I'd be watching it right now and I wouldn't be here; I've got to admit that. But hockey, I don't know.

First of all, I want to talk to the issue of time allocation. You know what? I'm tired of saying, "God, the government has just introduced another time allocation motion." I'm not going to do that anymore. Why am I

not going to do that anymore? Because when we are in government, we get accused by the opposition of moving time allocation. Then we get in opposition and we accuse the government of moving the motion. It's almost silly. It almost seems silly that every political party, once they get in opposition, attacks the government for moving time allocation motions. It's almost silly, yet we do it religiously, as if nobody notices.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** Why?

**Mr. Marchese:** Why? Because it is the job of opposition parties to do that, as you did when you were in opposition, and you relished it. Then you get into government and you say, "Oh, you're so negative. Stop complaining." Everyone who gets into government says, "The opposition is so negative." It's true: Opposition parties are always negative.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** Not you.

**Mr. Marchese:** Not me, except sometimes. Constructive.

So on the time allocation motion: Please, it's another one, and the government—but what is true, what I believe is going on, is that the government wants to get us out of here quickly. I estimate we're going to get out of here at the end of next week, which is going to make civil servants happy, I can guarantee. It may make some of our viewers happy; I can guarantee that, too. And some of us love to be here to debate; I can guarantee that as well. But I know for a fact that the Liberal government wants us out of here next week, and they're going to do their best to time-allocate everything and get us out.

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Why do they want us out? They haven't been getting some good news lately. They have been whacked for the last—

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** Who?

**Mr. Marchese:** You've been beaten up for the last five weeks. They hoped that their budget, the anti-poverty budget, was going to give them a little boost into the election so they could beat up New Democrats and claim, once and for all, "Yes, hallelujah, we've found poverty. We're dealing with it. Only we Liberals are going to attack poverty. Yes, it's a couple of months before the election, but we're on to it. Follow us. Abandon New Democrats and everything will be better," more or less.

Except the budget didn't work for you. You had a couple of problems with a couple of ministers, who shall remain nameless, and it caused a couple of weeks of problems and off-focus poor government. The Liberals are saying, "God, how did we get out of focus so badly? Let's end this problem. How do we deal with that? How did we get into a situation where the opposition parties are having a field day on everything except what we wanted them to talk about, and that was the budget, and they're not talking about the budget?" You struggled with your own members to raise a couple of issues with your questions.



We sometimes can be pretty silly, I've got to tell you. I was in cabinet, and when I was not in cabinet any longer, they could never, ever persuade me to ask the kinds of questions we ask ministers. It's pretty silly. We should end that practice altogether where we lob—you know, I used to play baseball, softball, and I loved it. We all lob those silly balls to the minister. No matter how you try to make it sound tough, they're lob balls, right? And we try to give the ministers another opportunity to look good on some issue, because they haven't been looking good for a while. It's silly. We've got to end it.

I've got to tell you, when New Democrats form the government in 2007, I will be one who publicly says, "We will end the practice of having our own members lob questions to the ministers." I guarantee that I will say that publicly. But it may not happen. You may be re-elected; you never know. You guys are still in the lead in the polls.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** We're looking good.

**Mr. Marchese:** You're not looking that great, I've got to tell you. You're saying you're looking good, but you're not looking that great.

But you never know. As Bob Rae used to say, "The polls can change." He was right—for the worse. In fact, when Bob Rae said, "The polls will change," he made it appear like we were going to get better in the polls. It didn't happen. You guys are going to pray that you're going to do better in the polls. I've got to tell you, I don't think it's going to happen. But this is a prognostication on my part; I could be wrong. Who am I? I don't have a crystal ball. I'm not the oracle whom the Greeks used to come to for advice—except, when asked, of course, I offer it as best I can. But who knows?

On this bill, briefly: What I know about this harmonization, Minister of Revenue, is that we're going to lose 90 million bucks. Is that correct, more or less, give or take? I thought the minister agreed that what the province of Ontario is going to lose is 90 million bucks. That's a whole lot of money. We could use that money. I know there are a lot of corporations that can never get enough of government largesse, that can never get enough of corporate welfare, that are going to ask for more and more. They ask of the Conservatives, and they love to give; and they ask of the Liberals, and they, too, love to give, under the guise of, "We have to be competitive," And I understand; I do understand.

There are times when we, as a government, have to be actively involved, as we were involved in 1992. The Minister of Northern Development and Mines would know this a little bit, I think. You'll remember when we were in government and we had a recession, which none of you admitted to be a fact. But that's okay; we understand politics. When the mills were shutting down, what did we do? We got together, the government, the union, the workers and business and, together, we saved a whole lot of plants. That's how we saved quite a few New Democrats, by the way, at that time when Bob Rae was not very popular. That's how we saved those seats. You

may not want to admit it, for whatever reason, but we saved a couple of seats in that very difficult time because of that tripartite agreement that we had with government, unions and the corporate sector—and we saved the mills. There are times when you've got to do that; absolutely. It's a lesson you could learn.

So when we are about to lose 90 million bucks—I know there are a whole lot of corporations just waiting to suck up to that money, because they can never get enough. I appreciate the fact that when we simplify the tax structure in whatever way, it's probably for the good, probably for the better. But not once did the minister say, "That 90 million bucks we're losing—it will be okay. We'll make it up somehow. We're going to make an extra \$90 million some other way." I didn't hear the minister talk about how we're going to make up for that \$90 million, except, "This is good for business because it will make them more competitive." God bless, but when we lose 90 million bucks—including, Minister, expertise because we won't be able to re-employ all of the people we're losing; I suspect you would agree—we will have lost a great deal of expertise that we've built up in that department for a long, long time, expertise that will be lost.

Maybe we don't have to worry about it. Maybe we'll be able to retain enough expertise. Maybe you're right. I don't know, but I worry. I worry about the number of people we're losing, and I worry that the Liberals do not have a plan in terms of how we manage this with the workers and the union so that we have some harmony between you and the workers and the union as we harmonize. So you have harmonized, but I'm not sure you have achieved the harmony you need to achieve with the workers. Because if you had, we would have heard about it, leading me to believe that there's a lot to worry about, how many workers we are going to lose, in addition to the 90 million bucks we're going to lose to the corporations, who can never get enough of your largesse.

The third and final point: Many provinces have harmonized across Canada. I would have loved for some Liberal, one Liberal, the minister or any minister to have brought forth some studies of the effect on our finances or their finances and the effect on staff where they have already harmonized. We know that a few other provinces have harmonized. Surely we must have done some study that says, "Here's what we are going to lose by way of money, by way of staff, by way of harmony with our workers and the loss of expertise." Yet no one—not the minister, not one Liberal MPP—has talked about what happened in another province that could help to persuade me we're on the right track. You need to persuade the opposition. You need to persuade those who might have some concerns about harmonization, and you would have persuaded some or many, had you decided that the way to do it is to show that where they've done it in other provinces, it went well. There was harmony; the loss was minimal—less than you thought, less than I thought; the loss to staff was minimal—less than you thought, less



than I thought; and the loss to expertise was minimal—less than I thought, maybe less than you thought. That would have helped me.

That data is available, surely. Perhaps the minister has that data, but I don't. It would have been good for you, Minister and the others, to have shared that data, because I am convinced that it is available to you. And if it is not available to you, you as minister and you as a government could have easily gotten that information from those provinces at the mere calling of those provincial governments.

So, Minister, I raise these concerns with you. I raise them so that those who are watching know that New Democrats have some concerns about the three or four points that I have made and that other members of the NDP have made. I hope that you will take them into account as this bill becomes enacted by your government, and I hope that those who are concerned will address those questions to you as the election gets closer.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate? Does any member wish to speak? If not, pursuant to the order of

the House dated May 9, 2007, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Chan has moved third reading of Bill 174, An Act to enact the Taxation Act, 2007 and make complementary and other amendments to other Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

I have been given a deferral slip. Pursuant to standing order 28(h), the vote will be deferred.

Orders of the day.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The deputy House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House is adjourned until 10 o'clock, May 31.

*The House adjourned at 1922.*











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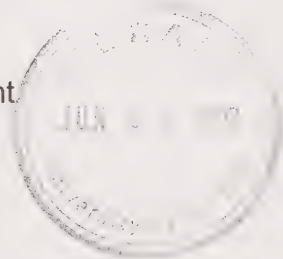
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Assemblée législative  
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Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature



# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 31 May 2007

Jeudi 31 mai 2007

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 31 May 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 31 mai 2007

*The House met at 1000.  
Prayers.*

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

### VAUGHAN HOSPITAL

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario support the efforts of the city of Vaughan, the Vaughan Health Care Foundation and the Central Local Health Integration Network as they work toward creating a hospital in the city of Vaughan.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Thornhill has 10 minutes to make his opening presentation.

**Mr. Racco:** What a pleasure it is for me today to introduce a private member's resolution in regard to the Vaughan hospital.

For a number of years now, the people of Vaughan and the people of the region of York and, I would also suggest, in particular the people of the 905 area have been asking for additional health care facilities in Vaughan and, as I said, the 905 area. The reason is that there seems to be a shortage that is quite visible, and so the community has initiated a process of making sure that we at the province understand the need for such a facility.

Quite frankly, since Mr. Smitherman became Minister of Health, significant progress has made in the region of York. I make reference to the three existing hospitals: All of them got money for expansions. So we have been able to respond quickly to such a need. Of course, the city of Vaughan is one of the major cities not only in Ontario but in Canada that does not have a hospital within its boundaries. Presently, people such as myself, who reside in the city of Vaughan—more specifically, in Thornhill—must use other hospitals. Those would be the North York General Hospital, and prior to that, the Branson hospital, or the York Central Hospital in Richmond Hill, or hospitals in Brampton or Toronto. Basically, we tend to go to four different areas for our needs. So the community has expressed clearly that it's necessary that we do something as quickly as possible.

Recently, the Minister of Health, the Honourable Mr. Smitherman, did make such an announcement. What my resolution today is attempting to do is make sure that all honourable members of this House, whether it be the opposition or the third party, potentially show their sup-

port for such a need and support the resolution, so that it's clear that all of us in this House have one thing in common when it comes to the city of Vaughan hospital and so that any future discussion or planning that needs to be done, in my humble opinion, would be seen by all as having broad support in this House.

I want to send the message clearly that there is so much support for this from the city of Vaughan. I want to recognize that today we have in the gallery some members and a few others who will be joining us shortly. From the Central Local Health Integration Network, we have the CEO, Mr. Ken Morrison, and from the Vaughan Health Care Foundation, the president, Angelo Baldassarra, and the vice-president, Michael DeGasperi. Both of them have been very much involved with this process from the beginning. We also have the secretary of the foundation, Quinto Annibale; the foundation administrator, Anastasia Vogt; and Chris Benedetti, who is assisting this organization in presenting the case to the province and everywhere. Welcome.

I should mention that Councillor Racco, who is also a member and my wife, is also to be here at any moment. I think she's looking for a parking spot somewhere.

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** Give her yours.

**Mr. Racco:** The subway is coming up, Frank. Until then, we must use the car.

Health care, as you know, is a priority for our government, and we have focused on innovation in public health care by building a system that delivers on three priorities: keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses. Of course, all of us know that we debated this issue in the House. We have made investments in health care, and some of those are:

We have invested \$5 billion in modernizing and expanding health care facilities by 2010 to meet the needs of the province's growing and aging population.

We have reduced waiting times for five key health care services: hip/knee joint replacements, cataract surgery, MRI exams, cancer surgeries and cardiac procedures.

We have invested \$143 million in emergency department action plans, which contain system-wide solutions to ensure that emergency rooms stay open and increase capacity in the health care system to meet the needs of Ontario patients.

Important steps in the area of health care that we have initiated, particularly in the 905 and GTA areas, are:

—Our government has invested \$285 million in new hospital funding, which is an 18.5% increase.



—We are also developing four new regional cancer centres throughout the GTA and the 905 area, with two new cardiac surgery programs and five new regional dialysis units.

1010

As I said earlier, the community is certainly very much in favour of and wants a hospital to be built very soon. Of course, the first step was taken when the minister recently made the announcement. The foundation hired EKOS polling some time ago to identify the community feeling on the matter, and more residents considered the establishment of a hospital an extremely important issue—the poll indicated that. In fact, 73% of residents believe that building a hospital in Vaughan is very important, with 61% stating that it is extremely, extremely important. Sixty-eight percent of residents believe that a hospital needs to be located in Vaughan rather than in a neighbouring community. The GTA/905 Healthcare Alliance is undertaking a postcard mail-in campaign, approaching all MPPs for the GTA. As of yesterday, my office had already received 32 cards from constituents who are asking that we take notice of the health care situation in the 905 and the GTA, and to bring health care services closer to home.

There are many cases we all know, I'm sure, where people are waiting in emergency for hours. Of course, this problem wasn't caused by us. This is a problem that came over a number of years when a little more should have been done. We here together, hopefully all of us, will be able to agree that more has to be done, and together we will make sure that those emergency waiting times will be reduced significantly—I would love to say "completely," but I think we all realize that is not always possible. But we should try to do that. I am also pleased that our government has done so, and, with this resolution, I hope to keep the spotlight on this important issue.

According to the Vaughan Health Campus of Care report, Vaughan residents primarily obtain acute in-patient day procedures and emergency services from one of the following four hospitals, only one of which is in York region: the York Central Hospital, which my friend on the opposite side represents, Humber River Regional Hospital, North York General Hospital and the William Osler Health Centre, which is in Brampton. That's where residents in Vaughan go if there is a need. At present, 56% of Vaughan residents seeking in-patient acute care services travel to Toronto to access essential health care services, combined with 36% of the broader York region.

Quite frankly, when people from my riding go to Toronto, that means we're putting more pressure on hospitals in Toronto, and that's not necessarily proper. There is pressure in Toronto and in the 905, and so we need more facilities to be able to respond within a reasonable time. Over three quarters of residents seeking day procedures and over half seeking emergency procedures have sought them in Toronto.

Is that my time?

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you very much. Further debate?

**Mr. Klees:** I am pleased to rise, I will say at the very outset, in support of the resolution that the member for Thornhill has brought forward. As someone who has represented York region since 1995, no one in this House is more familiar, perhaps, than I with the pressures on our health care services—in fact, on all of our social services—given the population growth we're facing and the challenges we have. I want, as well, to express my appreciation, on behalf of our caucus and John Tory, for the good work of the members of our community who have in fact shown leadership on this issue, and we wish them well as they continue to dedicate themselves, along with the LHIN, the staff and those showing leadership through that organization, as well as the municipality of Vaughan, which also has been very supportive of this initiative.

The reality is that governments can make many announcements, and I know they will take this one very seriously. I would ask the member to consider that, as we support this second reading of the bill and refer it to committee, he would agree that we incorporate into this—although it is merely a resolution; I understand that. So the committee process will not be entertained. But I would ask that he on his own, perhaps, agree with us that what we should do is ask that his resolution, in the final analysis, be expanded—and he can perhaps do this in a direct way with the Minister of Health—to include something that I feel is missing in the resolution which I wish the member would have included from the very outset: some very specific timelines relating to the decisions that are going to be made, because I do have a concern, and I'm looking at the news release from the Minister of Health. What concerns me here is that nowhere in this press release, which is the official communiqué of the Ministry of Health, does it speak to either specific timelines or to specific commitments in terms of this actually being a hospital. What I would like to see is, frankly, a free-standing hospital facility in Vaughan.

I've been there. Knowing how very carefully these communiqués are crafted, the wording is very important. Nowhere in this release does it refer to a hospital in Vaughan. It refers to supporting planning for new hospital services. That's important, I say to my colleague opposite. I would suggest we work very closely together to ensure that there is no misunderstanding about what the intent of the government is here and that members of the community don't spend unnecessary time thinking they're going in one direction and then, at the end of the day, the announcement is, "Well, thank you very much for all of your good work. We will provide new hospital services in some sort of alternative facility that may or may not be independent, that may or may not be managed from some other place," that may or may not achieve what in fact my good friend is telling us and what the newspaper reports are reporting. And there is a difference between the ministry's announcement and the interpretation of the media. The media, interestingly enough, refers consistently to a new hospital, that in fact this will be the first new greenfield hospital in more than a quarter of a century.



I am one who believes that we do need additional facilities in York region. As someone who worked very diligently—and if someone asks me what I take pride in most in the course of having been elected, I point to the Southlake Regional Health Centre and the work I was able to do, as the MPP at that time, for the riding of York–Mackenzie, working with Dan Carriere, the CEO of that hospital, in bringing a cardiac care centre that is now world class into that hospital. I raise a caution here. I mention that particular example for a reason: That particular facility in Southlake was delivered and established there against the lobbying of the other two hospitals in York region, against a lot of the recommendations that were made even by the Ministry of Health. But the reason we didn't give up that fight is that we believe fundamentally that it's important that we have health services closest to the residents who need them.

1020

The other two hospitals were arguing that that cardiac care centre should be established at Sunnybrook. I met an individual just two weeks ago who said to me, "Southlake saved my life." He's a very good friend. I didn't even know he had a problem. He had a heart attack, and the doctors told him that, had he not had service within moments of when he did, he would not have survived. That's why I am a strong proponent of ensuring we have the appropriate hospital facility in York region, and Vaughan, a very fast-growing community. I will support it. My colleagues, I'm sure, will support it. We've had the discussion, and I've had the opportunity to share with them the important needs.

Let me say that if there is anything any government could ever do for health care in this province, it would be to take politics out of health care. Far too many times, whether it's the announcement of a new hospital or a new clinic or the announcement of this, that or the other thing, it has been used primarily as the staging of a political event and then, by the time the election is over, we somehow forget about it.

I would love nothing better than to be part of a Legislative Assembly that has as its footnote that this group of men and women, as legislators, were able to take politics out of health care policy and do what is right because it's the right thing to do. In this particular case I believe we have it right, I hope the government gets it right, and forgive me if I say that it would give me no greater pleasure than to be part of the government, following October 10, that will have the responsibility to implement this.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** I say at the outset that the New Democratic Party is always in favour of publicly funded hospitals. I find it strange in the extreme that the member from Thornhill has to even, for example, raise this resolution. This is a majority government. Presumably with a majority government there is the will to do what this member wants. One suspects that perhaps there's a little infighting going on on the benches across the way and that this poor member from Thornhill has to introduce a private motion, and what a private

motion. Let me just read it: "That, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario support the efforts of the city of Vaughan"—"support"; operative word—"... towards creating a hospital"—not that they have a hospital, just that they support the efforts that go towards creating a possible whatever. Is it a publicly or privately financed hospital? It doesn't say. Is it a public hospital? It doesn't say.

So what this resolution says is not much. What it says to the poor members in the gallery is that this is a government that does not support whatever it is they're looking for—I assume, and I hope, that it's a publicly funded hospital—that this is a government that just allows them to blow off a little steam, that their member will get up and say a few nice-sounding words because this government will not act on its own when it can. It's got a majority; it could bring in its own bill tomorrow and pass it. It has with many others. In fact, we've witnessed this government in eight days giving itself a 31% raise. So this government can act. It can act quickly and it can act with certainty, but in this case, in your case, it's not going to act at all, and that's what we're hearing.

What's happening, I suspect, is that it's probably polling pretty well in the member for Thornhill's riding, so they have to do something. That's my suspicion. My suspicion is that they have to do something, so they're going to introduce a hot-air resolution that doesn't say much, just to please you, they hope, so that they might get re-elected. I really do hope that the folk in Vaughan are a little wiser than that.

It does, of course, give us in the New Democratic Party a chance to talk about what should be happening in health care in this province. Of course we should be putting money into health care in this province, and of course we should be putting money into health care in the area of Vaughan. There's no question. The question is, what kind of health care and who's going to be putting in the money for it? Is this government going to ante up the money or, as we've seen in Brampton, will this be one of those privately-publicly funded so-called P3 hospitals?

Let's talk about what's happening in Brampton. In Brampton, the cost of that hospital has gone from \$350 million to \$550 million. "At almost double the cost, the new hospital will open with 350 instead of ... 608 beds." If we want to look at what happens with privatized health care, we don't have to look far: just south of the border. We can see that privatized health care is way more expensive, way less efficient. This, by the way, is from the Ontario Health Coalition, who got over 80,000 Ontarians to vote to stop P3 hospitals in Sault Ste. Marie and Sarnia.

I'd like to take a few minutes just to run through some of the stakeholders, the health care professionals themselves, and what they have to say about this government's sorry track record on health care in this province.

First of all, private clinics, right across Canada but certainly in this province, are proliferating to the extent that we don't even know how many there are. I quote here from a Globe and Mail article. This is a couple of



months back. This is Jason Wright, who operates a website that lists 250 private clinics operating across the country, who says, "I can't help but be interested. I'm probably, as far as I can tell, the only guy out there with this type of directory," who knows what's going on. "Private clinics, where patients pay an annual membership to buy additional services even when receiving publicly funded treatments, usually open quietly, hoping to avoid the scrutiny or even government intervention." That's one of the things that's happening here.

When Tommy Douglas fought that brave fight to establish medicare for the first time in this country, he did not do so without opposition. In fact, he received an incredible amount of opposition. It's interesting that now we hear everybody in the House supporting medicare. Of course, they support it in word only and not necessarily in deed, as we've seen from our friends across the aisle. Because certainly with 250 clinics and more opening across the country, with an untold number opening in Ontario that are privately funded, that is the erosion of health care. That is a move towards a two-tier system.

Many of us know that federally the New Democratic Party is trying to organize a pharmacare program, trying to get that into place, because even if you can overcome the waiting lists and get to the hospital of your choice now, there is the drug issue: Can you afford the drugs that are then prescribed to you? Many of us, many of those in Ontario, cannot afford that. We not only need medicare, we need pharmacare as well. Of course, with this government, we're no closer to getting that either. There have been numerous articles written in numerous papers since this government was in place, chastising it, criticizing it for the rush towards privatization—too many really to quote, but hey, you know, I'll try.

For one thing, the nurses' association—we just came through Nursing Week and I had the pleasure of touring through my own hospitals, as I know many members did, and hearing the plight of our nurses: the fact that our hospitals are understaffed, need to attract and retain nurses. This is from Linda Haslam-Stroud, president of the Ontario Nurses' Association. It says that, "... next year, 15,000 to 30,000 registered nurses—that's one third of those practising in Ontario—are eligible to leave the system." They will be retiring and we do not have the nurses to replace them. We simply don't. We're scrambling. We don't have doctors. We all know about that. We know what the wait list is like to find a doctor, yet we have internationally trained doctors and surgeons in our midst. We have one in our own riding who is now working in a bake shop. He's going to have to go back to Iran because he can't afford the 10 years it's going to take for him to actually get his medical licence here. So we have internationally trained medical professionals who can't get work. It costs them too much and it takes too long so they return to their countries. We have a system where nurses are retiring. We all know, if we've had a wait in a waiting room, how long that takes. This is about staffing and it's about funding. At the end of the day, it's about funding. If you do not fully fund the

public health care system, you will not have a public health care system, because those with the means, those who can, will always seek out privatized help somewhere else. They'll even leave the country, as we've seen instances of, of course, to get the care they need, to get the drugs they need, that they can't get here.

1030

So this is the situation to which this member from Thornhill introduces a private member's resolution as a member of a majority government that can, quite frankly, do anything it wants, any time it wants, just to encourage a discussion—I mean, you've got to love the rhetoric: to encourage the possible creation of a maybe something somewhat hospital some day. I mean, folks, and those listening and watching at home, please, these are the dying days of a dying regime across the way. We've got maybe four days left in this House. This member knows it as well as everyone else here. He knows nothing's going to happen from this. What he's hoping to do, though, like all members here, to be frank, is to get re-elected. That's what this is about: This is about getting re-elected and siphoning off some of what I can possibly imagine is real anger and real will to actually have a real hospital built some day in Vaughan.

I think I'll conclude. I'll leave my benchmate here some time. But certainly this is not the way to go about it. What I would suggest, just like the member from Oak Ridges suggested, is that you vote for someone else next time.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe):** I'm honoured and privileged to stand up and speak in support of the resolution brought by my colleague, my friend the member from Thornhill.

Before I start, I want to welcome again the people from the LHIN and also from the health care foundation in the region, and also Councillor Sandra Racco. I hope you found a parking spot, because I know it's jammed. Hopefully due to Mario's advocacy and support of the subway to Vaughan, it will see the light and then you won't have to use cars anymore, as he mentioned, and in all of Vaughan you will be able to use and commute by subway to Toronto.

I listened to my colleague from Thornhill and I listened to the members from the opposition party and the third party. I see the importance of creating a hospital in the most growing area in the province of Ontario, especially in the Toronto region and especially in the 905 region. It's very important, as my colleague said, to serve the people in their location, especially when they have some kind of disease or some kind of health care problem that happens suddenly. In order to serve them, you have to have a facility in the region.

I was listening also to the member from the third party when she was talking about health care and many different issues. It gives me great pleasure to talk about our record in health care, our investment in health care, our support of public health care, for it to be accessible to all. We in this government invested more than any other



government in the history of the province in health care to maintain it in the public domain, to maintain it as accessible for all people seeking health care services.

I want to tell you something about my riding, London—Fanshawe, and London in general. I know how much we invest in the province of Ontario for health care. Of our budget this year, almost \$39 billion goes to health care to support the people of the great province of Ontario. Vaughan is one of the fastest-growing cities, one of the most important locations in this region, with very hard-working people, good taxpayers. I think they deserve some kind of service. They deserve some money back to their community to support the vulnerable people among them. That's why I'm standing up to support my colleague.

It's a great motion, a growth resolution. I wish the member from the third party could understand the politics inside any government and the politics in this place. In order to achieve something, it doesn't matter if you are within the government or outside the government; you have to be an advocate on behalf of your people. You have to bring those issues forward and talk about them—talk to the Minister of Health, talk to the Premier, talk to other ministers in order to bring goods for your riding. This is the way. It's part of the game we play in this place.

This member is a great advocate in his community. I had the chance, the privilege and the honour to be in his riding last Sunday. I saw the people from his riding coming to support him because he knows the importance of the hospitals and services in his riding. They also know how hard he is working on a daily basis to ensure he is able to deliver the goods for them, because it goes both ways: They support him, he supports them. I think that's why he got elected to represent them, to be their voice in this place.

The member from the third party said that you can do it fast and quick. That's not the way it works. We decided to invest more than \$5 billion to modernize the health care system in the province of Ontario. We didn't say Vaughan or London or Windsor or Toronto or Ottawa or Thunder Bay; we said we're going to invest an extra \$5 billion to help many health care services across the province. Therefore, all members of this House want to go forward to the Minister of Health and ask him for some of this money to come to their region, to come to their riding. That's what I do. I want to go to him and ask him to reinvest and invest more in my riding of London—Fanshawe. All the members, I guess, are open to that suggestion and are open also to go to him, knock on his door or walk across the aisle to him and ask him. That's the way it works. That's how democracy works.

That's why the honourable member brings this issue forward, seeking support from the whole House, to create awareness among not just the members of the House but among all the people of Ontario of how important for us public health care is, how important it is for us as a government to continue to open more services, more hospitals, more places to serve the people of Ontario.

I know she thinks that in four days a government cannot make a difference. Yes, it can make a lot of difference. We're committed to public health care. We're committed to public health care not just in Toronto, not just in the 905 area, not just in the province of Ontario; we're committed to service, to change the way we deliver health care. We decided to go far and wide to expand our service, because so many people don't have to be in acute health care service. They need and seek service in their homes because due to circumstances they have to be able to receive that service. That's why the great Minister of Health in Ontario was able to create another way to deliver health care to the people of Ontario.

But now we're talking about the resolution brought by my colleague the member from Thornhill to create a hospital in his riding. The numbers are growing on a yearly basis; now almost 240,000, and by 2010 it will be about 330,000, almost the size of the city of London. I think the people of Thornhill are working very hard. They—

**Interjection:** They deserve it.

**Mr. Ramal:** They deserve it. That's why I see my colleague in the caucus every Tuesday stand up and tell the Premier and all the caucus members about how important his riding is and how much his riding needs health care service. I know we have hospitals in nearby ridings, but it's very important to also expand health service. We have to expand; therefore, we are not closing hospitals. We are not neglecting the service of hospitals. We have a plan to expand service, with a strategy, with a way that we're able to fund it in Ontario, with a way that we're able to utilize every penny we spend, because it's very important for us and very important for the taxpayers.

Therefore, I stand in my place to support my colleague, and hopefully all the members in the House will support him.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I am pleased to rise today and speak to the resolution brought forward by the member from Thornhill. I understand how important a new hospital can be to a community and why the member from Thornhill would bring this resolution forward. But I think this resolution is a symptom of something that is wrong with our health care system and the present government.

It seems our health care system is so unresponsive to the needs of the community that this is the third member to bring forward a resolution like this in the last six weeks. The member from Burlington brought forward a resolution asking the McGuinty government to put the Burlington project on the Ministry of Health capital projects priority list and then release the \$40 million needed for the Joseph Brant hospital renewal project.

I understand from the member that there is a great staff at Joseph Brant Memorial but their ability to deliver health care is hampered by the fact that they are waiting for a much-needed addition. The hospital addition will let them properly serve the 13,800 people admitted to Joseph Brant every year. Currently at Joseph Brant hospital, an



average of 20 admitted patients are sleeping in hallways because there aren't any available beds.

1040

The member for Simcoe-Grey brought forward a resolution asking the minister to provide \$1.4 million a year to reopen the birthing unit at Stevenson Memorial Hospital. Since December last year, expectant mothers in his area are forced to drive at least 45 minutes to reach another hospital in Orangeville, Barrie or Newmarket.

The Liberal members opposite used their majority to vote down both of these resolutions. In fact, the Minister of Health even came into the House to vote against the resolutions.

Members have a responsibility to bring forward the concerns of their constituents. However, it seems that with this government there is a constant need for members to not just tell the minister and the ministry but to bring forward resolutions and read petitions over and over again because their needs are being ignored. To me, that signals that there is a problem with the Ministry of Health or that the Minister of Health just isn't listening. The fact that someone from the minister's own party is now bringing forward a resolution asking the government to support their local need for a hospital indicates that the minister isn't even listening to his own colleagues.

I know the frustration from experience. In December 2000, our then Minister of Health, Elizabeth Witmer, and the Progressive Conservative government announced a new hospital in Woodstock, and I was pleased to be a part of that announcement. I was also pleased to be able to follow it up with an announcement of \$12 million for a design study to start the process going. Since that time, the hospital foundation and many volunteers have been working hard to raise our community portion of the capital funding. I'm proud to say that they have done an incredible job and they are ready. I want to commend them for all their hard work. The volunteers have spent many hours organizing fundraising events. Our local schools have had fundraising campaigns. Members of our community and local businesses have made generous donations. It really has been a community effort.

The community is ready, but it seems that since 2003 the new government was dragging its feet on building the new hospital. I asked the minister questions in the Legislature, we talked to the minister's office and the Ministry of Health, but that wasn't enough. Like the member from Thornhill, the member from Burlington and the member from Simcoe-Grey, we couldn't get any action to address the community needs.

In December 2005, we had two busloads—80 people and two cows—come to the Legislature to ensure that our hospital was not forgotten. They brought with them 20,000 postcards signed by residents of Oxford asking the government to get moving.

Finally, in April 2006, we had the announcement that the hospital would be moving forward. Several ministers came to Woodstock and did a ceremonial groundbreaking, but so far that's the only shovel that's gone into the ground.

I understand that to get this hospital built we're going to have to get money through alternative financing and procurement, so the money will come from the private sector and be repaid by the government in the future. What I'm having trouble understanding is that if we don't need government money, why can't we get the hospital started? Things are moving, and we're going to continue to watch closely to make sure that the hospital stays on track, and keep pushing to get those shovels into the ground.

Given what we are going through in our own community, I am pleased to be able to support this resolution this morning. I understand that Vaughan is the largest urban centre in the nation without a hospital. I know that building a hospital is not an easy process, and I want to wish them luck with their efforts.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** It's a privilege and an honour to stand here and debate this resolution. When I read the resolution last night and wondered what I might be saying here today, I was in awe of the simplicity of this resolution. I was in awe of what the member for Thornhill is asking, because of all the resolutions that I've had the honour or the privilege or even, I guess, the obligation to debate in this House, this one seems to me to be one of the strangest. It seems to me to be one of the strangest because it asks for us to do almost nothing except support three hard-working groups in their efforts. Of course we support the three hard-working groups in their efforts. Who would not support these three hard-working groups as they struggle to get something for their community which is probably very much needed?

I say "probably" because I know from my own experience. In my own office, my executive assistant lives in Vaughan and has had problems over the years trying to get adequate health care for herself and her family. I remember one occasion when her daughter, who was in a minor traffic accident, was taken by ambulance all the way to Uxbridge because there was nothing closer by. I remember that, and the struggle for a local hospital is, of course, important.

Having said that, I'm going vote for this, and I'm all but sure this House will, but at the same time, I wonder why this government and this member have not given this kind of support to other groups who are fighting for equally good things, and seem to have been neglected by this government.

You know, just as he is supporting the three groups in Vaughan, I wonder why he and his government are not supporting agencies who have advocated non-stop for three years, who are fighting for the poor; why he has not supported a minimum wage of \$10 an hour, which has been called for; why he and his government have not supported decent and liveable ODSP rates for people who are disabled and who cannot work. Those disability rates have been increased at such a terrible rate—3% in the first year of the government, zero in the second, 2% for half a year in the third, 2% for half a year in the fourth—so that a person on ODSP in this province is



actually worse off today, under this government, than they were in the deepest, darkest days of Mike Harris.

I haven't heard him saying we need to support these agencies for the poor and the work that they're trying to do. I haven't heard him say, when they're talking about ending the clawback, that we need to support these agencies. In fact, all he and his government do is ignore those ones.

The same is true of the legal clinics. We just got a recent e-mail from a legal clinic dealing with South Asians in Ontario and they are being forced to shut down—that same legal clinic that is fighting for new housing, that same legal clinic that is fighting for the rights of recent immigrants, the rights of people to have their credentials recognized, the rights of people who find themselves in trouble with the law. They're advocating, and I don't see this government passing a motion, or this member passing a motion, to support them.

I see the daycare advocates. I see them here all the time when they come here, and they are fighting for really good things—that this government honour its commitment to spend \$300 million for daycare, which they promised four years ago and haven't spent a nickel on yet. The daycare advocates come here and want decent-quality daycare, and we've seen, in the *Toronto Star* for the last few days, the failure of this government to do that. They come here and they ask a simple question: Where are the federal dollars that were given? It seems to me that the government has pocketed those. I haven't seen this member or this government stand up with a motion, saying, "We support their efforts too."

What we have is the member standing up, because it's his responsibility as the member from Thornhill, to recognize the efforts in his own community. Of course, we recognize them too, and I support them, but I also support, and our caucus also supports, the efforts of other agencies, other legal clinics, other daycare advocates, other advocates who are doing an equally good job. They need to be recognized, and their causes need to be recognized as well.

Now, the member from Oxford briefly touched on a couple of things about the other private members' bills that have been here, and I would be remiss if I did not state that the member from Burlington made a very passionate case, only to have the government turn it down—government backbenchers and people present. The member from Simcoe-Grey made a very passionate and well-balanced argument about the birthing centre in his community, only to have the government shut it right down.

What we're going to see today, of course, is, because of the massive government majority, everyone is going to vote for this one, because this one has to do with a government member's riding, not an opposition member's riding. I think that's a real shame, and if the government members had been a little smarter on the last couple of votes, they might have done what was right.

Having said that, here we have a resolution, and, in the end, a hospital needs to be built there. There's no deny-

ing there is a need and there is absolutely no denying that we need to support hospitals in each and every community in this province.

1050

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** Thank you for allowing me to speak today on this very important issue. I'm pleased to support the member from Thornhill. He has been a long-time passionate member on this subject. I know that at every meeting I have ever had with him, he's always mentioned the word "hospital," so this is a continuation of the long work in advocacy I have seen him do.

Hospitals, as most people know, are very near and dear to my heart. Since I was elected for Brampton Centre back in 2003, I've championed additional investments in both the health care and the facilities in Brampton. Shortly after arriving at Queen's Park, I spoke with the Minister of Health and the Premier about my community's desperate need for a new hospital. They listened and promised to deliver for my community, and in October 2004, the construction crews and cranes arrived at the Bovaird Drive and Bramalea Road site.

Investing in Ontario's health care is essential, and the government of Ontario has made many improvements to hospitals and the health care system. Our government's investment of \$285 million in new hospital funding in the 905 GTA—an 18.5% increase after the Tories cut \$79 million—is the reason the new Brampton Civic Hospital is being built and is scheduled to open on schedule this fall.

Since taking office, there has been a 19.7% increase in the funding of 905 hospitals. These funds went to ensure that the region has improved health care services for our residents. Despite the increase of funds in the 905 region, the city of Vaughan still doesn't have a hospital. I believe residents should have the right to access the same health care services within their own city, without travelling great distances for health care emergencies. I say that because I have the luxury of having a hospital in my community. It's an older one right now until the new one is built, but I had the luxury of having all three of my children born in my local hospital. In 1984, 1986 and 1988, I had my three sons born in my community hospital. That's something that isn't an emergency, but it's something that helps you feel that community spirit in your own community. It's something that I believe everyone is entitled to: to have that important, life-changing event happen close to home.

In reading the background notes, I couldn't help but look back at what my community was going through at the time I was elected, and I can see so many parallels with my community and the current situation that the community of Vaughan is facing. Much like Brampton, the city of Vaughan has seen a tremendous growth in population for the last two decades and has consistently been one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Canada.

Vaughan has experienced a 60% growth rate in population and has expanded beyond its own infrastructure resources. In 1981, the population was 29,600; in 2005, it



was 240,000. The estimated population by 2021 will be over 300,000 people. According to the Vaughan Health Campus of Care report, Vaughan residents primarily obtain acute in-patient, day procedure and emergency room services from one of the four following hospitals, only one of which is in York region: York Central Hospital, Humber River Regional Hospital, North York General Hospital and, of course, my hospital, William Osler.

Like Vaughan, Brampton residents were faced with long wait times and inadequate services. Many times, they would have to leave Brampton and travel to Mississauga or Georgetown to obtain essential services that they should have had access to in their own city, and in October, we'll have access to those services. This trend is never good for neighbouring communities, as it stretches the resources of surrounding hospitals to properly service their own communities.

Local residents in Brampton were also eager to support the building of Brampton Civic Hospital, and they understand that Brampton Civic will provide the quality health care we deserve. The new Brampton Civic Hospital site represents an important extension of health care services to our fast-growing community. Like Brampton, significant community partnerships have been formed between the Vaughan Health Care Foundation, the city of Vaughan and the Central Local Health Integration Network in support of a hospital in Vaughan. Much like in my community, the enthusiasm and the willingness of the public to support fundraising events held on behalf of the health care facility is the grassroots foundation that's needed to be successful. In Brampton, we have a campaign called "Here for You ... Caring for You." It has been tremendously successful. We have raised over \$87 million to date, and we have some very fine people working in the foundation to achieve that.

I know that the most recent fundraiser that was held in Vaughan was the city of Vaughan mayor's gala back in May, and they raised more than three quarters of a million dollars. That's quite a substantial fundraising effort for a hospital in Vaughan.

The government of Ontario has achieved much on the health care file. We have reduced wait times for five key health care services, namely hip/knee joint replacement, cataract surgeries, MRI exams, cancer surgeries and cardiac procedures. We continue to make improvements in our health care system and we're making excellent progress. These improvements are vital. Developing a hospital in the city of Vaughan can only benefit Ontario's reputation as a positive example of an efficient health care system.

I believe the member from Thornhill's resolution is in line with our government's plan for innovation in public health care and building a system that delivers on our three priorities: keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses. I think the member from Thornhill has been passionate on this issue and he has been consistent. I admire his tenacity, and I support this resolution wholeheartedly.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** I guess I question why this motion is here—because

whether or not you build a hospital is not a political decision; it's really based on the population and the need for the services. That's one of the things our government had the courage to do: a review of hospital services in the province of Ontario, recognize that many hospitals were sitting with wings totally unoccupied, yet we were heating the space and paying the rent. It was our government that made decisions to build new hospitals, such as the one in Thunder Bay, a new hospital in Peterborough and a new hospital in Woodstock, the William Osler hospital. It was unfortunately this government, when they were elected, that delayed the construction of these hospitals. They did nothing for 18 months. In fact, today, Woodstock still sits with no activity. Cambridge hospital, which was promised a renewal, has absolutely no progress going on.

It was our government that recognized the need of the growing areas and communities around the GTA: Oshawa, and my colleague has referred to Southlake, which got cardiac care. We were the ones who expanded and brought services closer to home such as cardiac services, cancer services, dialysis and 20,000 long-term-care beds—there had been none built for over 10 years. For us, any movement towards the recognition of the need for a new hospital in Vaughan makes absolute sense. When the population's there and there is a need, let's go out and support it.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

I'll return to the member for Thornhill, who has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Racco:** Let me say thank you to all the people who spoke on this resolution: my friend the member from Oak Ridges, the member from Parkdale-High Park, the member from London-Fanshawe, the member from Oxford, the member from Beaches-East York, the member from Brampton Centre and the member from Kitchener-Waterloo. I thank you all because you all said that you're going to support this resolution. Certainly that was the objective: to make sure that everyone in this House, or certainly the majority, does support the resolution so that the foundation, which is in attendance here today, will continue to do what has been said, and that is to raise money in addition to what the province will be able to provide.

There is strong leadership in the community that is present here today, not only from the foundation but also from the city of Vaughan, and of course from the LHIN. They do see merit in the construction of this hospital as soon as possible. This resolution, once we vote on it today at 12—and it's clear it's going to pass—will give them more momentum to go out there and raise even more money so that the community will be a shareholder more than ever by assisting, if they choose to—they don't have to; but if they want to—so that this hospital will be able to provide some new leadership in health care by looking at new initiatives that probably are not available today.

The people are there, the business community has been there, the community at large has been there and



will continue to be there. There are enough leaders within the community who have made a moral commitment to make sure that the people of Vaughan get the best possible hospital that we can not only afford but that the community wants, by their extra input into this construction.

We need to start the process. The minister made that direction, and now it's up to the people of Vaughan to make it happen.

1100

## BONE MARROW AWARENESS MONTH ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 SUR LE MOIS DE LA SENSIBILISATION AU DON DE MOELLE OSSEUSE

Mr. Crozier moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 225, An Act to make the month of November Bone Marrow Awareness Month / Projet de loi 225, Loi visant à désigner le mois de novembre Mois de la sensibilisation au don de moelle osseuse.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Essex has 10 minutes for his leadoff speech.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I'm both pleased and honoured to rise this morning to speak to Bill 225, which I introduced a short time ago. The introduction of the Bone Marrow Awareness Month Act is inspired by the story of little Katelyn Bedard, who lost her battle with leukemia at the age of three because she was unable to find a match for a lifesaving bone marrow donation. This bill aims to encourage people to register to become bone marrow donors.

I'm honoured this morning that we have with us, in the members' east gallery, Joanne and Bryan Bedard, parents of Katelyn.

A bone marrow transplant is a procedure that is required when a patient's own bone marrow is destroyed using high doses of chemotherapy and radiation. For many people who are suffering from diseases such as leukemia, a bone marrow transplant is the only hope for long-term survival. A transplant requires matching tissue types between patient and donor. These tissue types are inherited, but 70% of patients do not have a matched donor in their family. These people rely on the kindness of strangers who have volunteered to donate their bone marrow through the national bone marrow registry. But sadly, the demand for lifesaving bone marrow transplants far outweighs the matches found within the registry.

If passed, my private member's bill would name November of each year Bone Marrow Awareness Month and would help raise awareness about the need for donors in Ontario. It is my hope that this will result in an increase in the number of people registered, and in turn, save the lives of those needing this precious bone marrow.

Each year, as I have suggested, hundreds of Canadians need bone marrow transplants to treat potentially life-

threatening illnesses, and yet, as I said, fewer than 30% of these patients will find a family member who can donate compatible stem cells found in bone marrow. For the majority of patients, an unrelated donor is the only available source of bone marrow. In order to help these patients, and others around the world, find compatible, committed and healthy unrelated donors, the Unrelated Bone Marrow Donor Registry was established in 1989 by the Canadian Red Cross Society and was assumed by Canadian Blood Services in 1998.

The success of the registry, however, depends on people who are willing to sign up to provide the gift of life to someone who is not related to them. While many patients have received a lifesaving bone marrow transplant from a donor found through the registry, many others continue to search for their miracle match. For this reason, the Katelyn Bedard Bone Marrow Association was founded in 2005 to promote awareness about worldwide bone marrow registries, to educate on bone marrow donation, to bring attention to the pressing need for bone marrow donors and to encourage all adults to consider joining the registry.

I should mention that Katelyn's parents, Joanne and Bryan, are close to my riding. They're from the city of Windsor.

The Katelyn Bedard Bone Marrow Association has a mission statement. The mission of the Katelyn Bedard Bone Marrow Association is to promote awareness, as I've said, about worldwide bone marrow registries, to educate about bone marrow donation and to encourage all adults to consider joining the registry.

The Katelyn Bedard Bone Marrow Association was founded in July 2005 by Bryan and Joanne. Bryan and Joanne were inspired to start the association after losing their daughter Katelyn to leukemia at the age of three, when she was not able to find a bone marrow donor. The [givemarrow.net](http://givemarrow.net) website is an information centre assisting people in learning about bone marrow donation and making it easier for them to find out how to join the bone marrow registry in their country.

What is bone marrow? It's something that I think much of the population is not aware of. We constantly talk about tissue and organ donation, but I think that too often bone marrow donation is either not thought of in that context or not thought of at all. Bone marrow is the tissue found in the soft centre of the bones. It manufactures blood cells, including red blood cells, which carry oxygen; white blood cells, which fight infection; and platelets, which help to stop bleeding. Not surprisingly, when marrow stops working as it should, the consequences can be life-threatening.

What is a bone marrow transplant? In a bone marrow transplant, a patient's diseased marrow is replaced with healthy marrow from a volunteer donor. To prepare for transplant, the recipient is usually given high doses of radiation and/or chemotherapy to destroy the diseased marrow. At this point, stripped of the ability to manufacture life-giving blood cells, the recipient is extremely vulnerable. He or she will not survive unless the donor



proceeds with the donation. Once the healthy bone marrow is collected from the donor, it's given intravenously to the recipient as soon as possible.

Which diseases, you might ask, are treated with bone marrow transplants? Well, there are a wide variety of diseases and disorders that are treated with bone marrow transplants, including blood-related diseases such as leukemia and aplastic anemia, as well as inherited immune system and metabolic disorders.

We also might ask, what can a designated month during the year do to help this cause? Well, it raises awareness. The fact that we're even discussing the issue here in the Legislature today and, of course, what will result from it if this bill is passed—and I certainly seek your support in that respect—the public will become more aware of what is needed when it comes to bone marrow transplants.

There's so much we do today to help each other in society. As we discuss in this House, we provide medical care and education, and there are any number of agencies out there that help those who are in need. Is there anybody in more need than someone whose life is threatened by disease? That's why we need to continue to encourage those who might consider, as I mentioned earlier, tissue or organ donation or, in this case, bone marrow donation?

I seek your support today. In my view, this is truly a private members' issue that we can deal with in this place, that we can seek the support of all members on, and that we can seek unanimous support on.

Simply, what I'm asking today is that you support Joanne and Bryan in their effort to raise awareness of the need for donors and that we all consider, in fact, being a donor if that's at all possible.

1110

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** I'm very pleased to support the motion that has been put before us by the member for Essex, Mr. Crozier: Bill 225, An Act to make the month of November Bone Marrow Awareness Month. I certainly would like to welcome, on behalf of our caucus, the parents, Bryan and Joanne, here today. I do appreciate your efforts to ensure that we have the opportunity to raise awareness of this very significant issue.

I think most of us think about donating organs, but I don't think that in the past there has been much thought given to promoting bone marrow. It's something that people just don't think about. But if we can get passage of this bill today, and if it would help to promote awareness about what we can do here in Ontario by ensuring that each year the month of November would be Bone Marrow Awareness Month. I think in future we would see far more people prepared to donate bone marrow. I think the reason most people don't is that it's like organ transplants: People don't really give thought, oftentimes, to how they can help other individuals. So I think passage of this bill today would provide us with the opportunity to raise public awareness.

In reading the background information here that has been provided to us by the member, it was interesting to learn more about the Katelyn Bedard Bone Marrow Association and what they're trying to do, not just here in this province but worldwide, and also their attempts to bring attention to the very pressing need we have throughout the world for bone marrow donors and to encourage adults to consider joining the registry. As well, the association does support the families that have a family member in need of a bone marrow or stem cell transplant. The Katelyn Bedard Bone Marrow Association is one that I think is doing a lot for people in Ontario. I am pleased that Bryan and Joanne are here with us today.

We take a look here at the Canadian Blood Services registry and we find out the connection that they have with bone marrow donations. It also mentions in here that fewer than 30% of the people who need a bone marrow transplant are going to be able to find a family member with compatible bone marrow to donate. For the rest of the people, it's that unrelated donor who is going to be so absolutely essential to find, and of course the Unrelated Bone Marrow Donor Registry does locate these compatible, committed, healthy, unrelated donors for Canadian bone marrow patients and for patients all around the world. So that is a very important service that is provided.

If we can take one month a year each year to ensure that people know about the fact that they can do this, that they can, obviously, save the life of another person somewhere, this is, I think, something most people would take a look at and consider doing. If you can find a match, it is certainly going to give more of an advantage to the individuals in their quest to find somebody who is compatible. So we need to increase the size of the volunteer donor pool in order to better the chances of finding a matching bone marrow donor for every patient who is in need of a transplant. Really, that's the purpose of this bill: expanding that pool and making sure that everyone who needs a transplant has access to someone who would be compatible. Obviously, the more people you have in the pool, the more of a chance you have that there will be someone who is compatible. So I do compliment the member from Essex for bringing this forward.

Again I express my appreciation to Bryan and Joanne, who started the association after the loss of their daughter to leukemia at the age of three as a result of not being able to find a bone marrow donor. I am confident that this House will support this resolution and that we can quickly pass it.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** I too rise to support this motion. In so doing I hope that the member, when he is asked whether he wants to send this to committee, simply asks that it go for second and third reading. It does not seem to me that this is a bill that necessarily should be held back. It is not a bill that needs any study. It's not a bill that requires input from outside sources. The request is a minor but important one: that the month of November be bone marrow donation month.



So I preface my remarks by suggesting that certainly there would be unanimity on this—from this caucus and I'm sure from all members present in the House—if such a motion were made.

Having said that, I support this motion because we have an obligation in this society and as human beings to help those who are vulnerable when we can do so. There is no doubt that the number of people who are requiring bone marrow transplants is increasing as the technology increases, as we better understand the benefits of the bone marrow transplant and those diseases that can be eradicated by its use. This is a relatively new technology in terms of humankind. Oftentimes when people had diseases and there was no known cure, people quite simply died. Today we know how to effect the kind of change, that a bone marrow transplant will take place.

Quite regularly, although not as regularly as I wish, I have been a donor through Canadian Blood Services and through the Red Cross before that. What I have given, of course, is not bone marrow but blood. That service does a remarkable job in terms of saving and protecting people's lives.

What I am hoping as well that the member will consider and that the government may consider is that we need not only to have an awareness month but to beef up the services that are provided by Canadian Blood Services when it comes to the collection of blood and to the collection of bone marrow. We need the registry to be expanded. We need the registry to contain many more names. In order for them to do that, they will require the monies to advertise, to advocate and to teach. Quite frankly, that's where the real impetus may have to come. I agree that we should have a month in November. But in the final analysis, having done our part here, it is incumbent upon this Legislature, should there be financial wherewithal—which I agree is not part of the motion. But there should be the financial wherewithal for Canadian Blood Services to expand their mandate to expand the list of people who will come forward to make the donation.

The numbers who have required transplants, as I said, have grown and continue to grow, and the numbers that are required will, at the same time, have to expand as well.

1120

I remember only too well, although I was not in this Legislature, the very sad case of Premier Bob Rae's brother. Some of you may remember that Bob Rae tried to assist his brother through a bone marrow transplant that, unfortunately, did not work. His brother eventually died. But it was a very sad and well-publicized case of one man's efforts to assist another human being in his family. If you talk to Bob Rae even to this day, he will tell you about his efforts and how he felt compelled to do what was right and what was just. I'm sure he only wishes it had been successful.

Having said that, we all have that obligation. We all have the obligation to do what we can. I think, as part of the motion here today, we should support it, and I ask the

member who puts it forward at the conclusion to seek the unanimous consent of this House for second and third readings.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Ms. Deborah Matthews (London North Centre):** I want to start by thanking my colleague Bruce Crozier for raising this issue and making all of us aware of this. I have to confess that although I actually was registered with a bone marrow transplant many years ago, I had forgotten about that. I think what the member has done has made us all just stop and think about it and refresh our memories. It gave me an opportunity to learn more about it, and I want to tell the House about some of the things I learned.

I spoke to a doctor from London at London Health Sciences Centre, Dr. Anargyros Xenocostas. He works with Dr. Kang Howson-Jan at LHSC, which is one of four locations in Ontario that do stem cell mobilization or bone marrow transplants. He welcomes this initiative and asked me to pass on to the Bedard family his appreciation for you turning your personal tragedy into what will be a very powerful force.

He told me a very interesting story that I think should give all of us hope. He told me a story about a Taiwanese monk, a woman who was a monk. I didn't know monks could be women, but he assured me that this was a Taiwanese female monk who took it as her personal mission to get Taiwanese people registered. The results of that one woman are that between one million and two million Taiwanese people are registered, the largest proportion of people anywhere. I think we can move on that and take some heart that if people are asked, they will do it. It's not a difficult thing to register, and when the call comes, if in fact you are selected, then the sacrifice you're asked to make is tiny relative to the benefits you're giving someone.

Dr. Xenocostas also talked about the very strong need to get donors from a more diverse ethnic mix. In Canada, about 83% of the donors who are registered are Caucasian, but there are some groups that are very much under-represented on the registry, so that when people who need a transplant from those different ethnic groups come up, it's much more difficult to get a match. The importance of all of us registering is great, but also encouraging registration from the full diversity of our province of Ontario. He said that the greatest need is for donors of African descent, followed by native North Americans and, thirdly, Asians. So it's particularly important that we get more people registered from those particular groups.

There is an international bone marrow registry—fascinating to me—and Canadian Blood Services is part of that international registration. Worldwide, there are over 11 million people registered. That has grown from just 155,000 close to 20 years ago. So the number of registrants is growing by leaps and bounds, and having the international network really does speak to some of the issues around diversity.

I guess what I would really like to do is again thank the Bedard family and thank the member. Let's all of us



just undertake to get ourselves registered if we are eligible, and spread the word in our communities that this is a small service to ask. The more people who register, the more likely it is that someone like Katelyn would have found her match and would be with us today.

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** I am pleased to rise this morning and join in the debate on Bill 225, the Bone Marrow Awareness Month Act brought forward by the member from Essex. I'm used to seeing him on Thursday morning sitting as the Speaker of the Legislature so it's a little unusual for me to be looking across. But I thank him for bringing forward this very important private member's bill.

I appreciate the intent. I'm sure some of us have been directly or indirectly involved in a situation with someone who has fought cancer, leukemia or a related illness where the treatment may require a bone marrow transplant. I was a nurse before I was elected to the Legislature from the riding of Haliburton–Victoria–Brock. When I worked in Florida with a fellow Canadian nurse, she ended up having leukemia and flew back—she was originally from Newfoundland—and was able to receive a bone marrow transplant here in Toronto. It was very successful. She's back in Newfoundland resuming what nursing duties she is allowed to do because, of course, with a transplant you can't be directly involved with a lot of infected patients.

When I worked in the ICU, I was involved with transplant recipients. The work done by the doctors and nurses there is phenomenal. It was mentioned that Nursing Week happened a couple of weeks ago and the opportunity that we had to go into our hospitals and speak with our registered nurses, our doctors and the health care professionals. Being a nurse before I came here, I can tell you the words that you don't want to hear are, "There is nothing more than can be done." It's hard on all of us, including the families, but it's hard on us working. Our goal is to make people better. When you hear those words, you feel absolutely powerless.

When we have the opportunity to make more people aware of how they can save lives and how strangers can save lives—I don't think many people know about that, and that is the important part of bringing this bill forward today, to make people more aware of the bone marrow registry and how they can sign up. They don't need to know anybody. They might not have a connection. The member who just spoke spoke about the ethnic connections with bone marrow. The fact that Canadian Blood Services is doing that list is very important.

I had a group in my riding that received a Trillium grant last week, Hospice Kawartha Lakes. It's a tremendous organization of staff and volunteers who work there to provide care for bereavement and to patients during illnesses. I'm very proud to have such an organization in my riding.

For so many, a bone marrow transplant is the only thing that can be done to save a life in the brave fight against leukemia. Those folks who are willing and perfectly able to, do want to donate.

The declaration of Bone Marrow Awareness Month, as I said, brings more people on board. The member from Parry Sound–Muskoka's daughter, who is finishing her master's at the University of Toronto and is working at Sick Kids, has signed up already in the bone marrow registry. It's wonderful that Abigale does that, but a lot of us don't know about it. That is what the intent of this bill is.

My colleague from Oak Ridges brought forward legislation regarding organ and tissue donation, Bill 67, the Organ and Tissue Donation Mandatory Declaration Act. Both of these bills—Bill 225 today and Bill 67 that my colleague from Oak Ridges brought forward—are not forcing anyone to make a decision to be a bone marrow donor or an organ and tissue donor. What these pieces of legislation are intended to do is help people to confront these very important issues periodically in the course of their lives and encourage consideration of this life-giving issue.

I want to thank the member from Essex and the member from Oak Ridges for bringing forward this type of legislation, which I think holds the answers to saving a lot of people's lives. I appreciate the short opportunity that I've had to speak to that, I commend the member for bringing this forward and hope it receives all-party support.

1130

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** It's a pleasure and a privilege to speak, of course, in support of this bill. This is going to have all-party support. Certainly we in the New Democratic Party would like to see this become law while this government still sits in this session, and that next November be the first November to be designated Bone Marrow Awareness Month, so we don't have to wait for another year for this.

I also want to commend Joanne and Bryan. I know, or think I might know, how difficult this must be for you to be sitting there today and to be reminded of why you're here. But I also want to commend you on behalf of all Ontarians and certainly our caucus and our party for your incredible bravery and courage. You've taken a tragedy and turned it into a triumph with your website, which I did spend quite a bit of time last night going through and thought was quite wonderful. Certainly I will pledge in my riding of Parkdale–High Park to put the word out about the registry.

I remember many years back, the best man at our wedding played in a band called Downchild Blues. A wonderful and very talented young woman, Jane Vasey, who played in Downchild and who is a Toronto legend, if not a Canadian legend—Downchild still exists—had leukemia. They lost her before the age of 30. She was a friend of mine. That was the first experience I had of someone who died from leukemia and died for want of a bone marrow transplant. So it affected our family very quickly, very early on, and again, a great loss to the city. I know that in that instance her family set up a scholarship fund at York University for young musicians—again, people of courage and bravery who took a tragedy



and turned it into a triumph for someone else. So thank you for what you've done.

This being a private member's bill, I would urge those across the aisle, because they have the power to do so with a majority government, to not wait, to move this forward quickly. We have all-party support here. There's nothing stopping our House leaders from bringing it forward and making it law. So we need to do that. We need not to wait.

Thank you for what you've done. Actually, on your website, under the information section, I found a very interesting other issue about cord-blood stem cells saving lives. The question at the head of this article is, "Why Aren't They Readily Available to Canadians?" I quote from that article:

"Canada does not have any large public-access, taxpayer-supported cord-blood banks. Instead, policy-makers have stood by while the collection and 'banking' of this valuable resource has been commercialized, with parents who can afford it paying around \$1,000 plus a yearly fee of over \$100 to store their child's cord blood," in case one day they need it. I thought, not only is this brave family standing up for all of those who we know are in need of a bone marrow transplant but also for other families and also, and in the context of that article, for those who perhaps can't afford to fund it themselves. I know that many folk, when faced with a calamity in their own family, who have the resources search all over the world for such a donor, whereas those who live in poverty don't have those resources and can't do that.

We in our caucus would like to see not only Bone Marrow Awareness Month but also money put behind the registry, money put behind an awareness campaign, money put behind a registration system of some sort. We would like to see not only this bill pass but perhaps a challenge to our friends opposite that they could bring in something with some teeth and some dollars behind it so that we could get this moving for everyone.

It reminds me, and it must remind everyone in this House, of the case of organ donation, a very corollary kind of topic that has been discussed here at length. Our own member from Niagara has brought in a bill about presumed consent in that case.

I'm quoting from an article from April which says: "More than 1,700 Ontarians are waiting for organs, mostly kidneys and livers ... one person dies every three days." Again, this is a huge issue, where people are dying for want of action—and a challenge to the government across the way. With a few days left, we have some time, we have private members' bills before this House that deal with that and should be passed, should be moved into law, so that those people stop dying and families stop losing their loved ones for want of a registry.

I don't think Ontarians are hard of heart. I think, as many members have mentioned already, that people just don't have the awareness. People don't think about it. We're busy, we go about our lives, and until it touches us personally, we just don't know, and we don't know how to go about it. That's the other aspect. That's what your

website does so forcibly—but I think you would be the first to agree that it needs some money behind it so that the word can get out on a broader scale.

What might money do to back up this bill? Money might sponsor an ad campaign. Money might sponsor a beefed-up blood registry, as you heard the member from Beaches–East York speaking about. These are dollar-inspired initiatives.

I would challenge the government across the way, which has been free with dollars in other directions which some of us might not think are quite so worthy, to put some dollars towards this because—and I'm sure the member from Essex would agree—this would only add to the strength of this bill.

I also wanted to mention, just because I have a few minutes left, that one of the other groups of folks seeking redress for their children who have come before us many times are those parents of autistic children—and we're sadly lacking in this Legislature. We have challenged those opposite to do something other than taking the parents of autistic children to court—which is what they're doing now—and suing our member for trying to find out how much they've spent doing that; to actually step up to the plate and do something for the parents of autistic children. In light of that, there is a walk this Sunday—and I wanted to just put a plug in for that—starting from city hall, for those who have been touched by autism, a phenomenally costly disease to be touched by in a family.

I'll wrap up. Suffice to say, thank you for coming today, thank you for inspiring this. Thank you to the member from Essex for putting it forward.

Let's not wait. Let's not tarry. Let's push this through to law. If we can't do it around an awareness month, my goodness, what does this say to the public out there about the state of this government? If we can't move in a few days, when we have all-party support in a House, to make November awareness month, so it can happen next November and not the November after that or the November after that, then we should go home even sooner than I hear we will, which is next week.

Please—this is a question that I think we might even use the word "beg" about—we beg the Speaker and the government to speak within their own caucus to make sure that this happens this session, and that means either today or next week. We hope that that happens, we beg that that happens and we pray that that happens.

We thank you again for what you do. Our hearts and prayers go out to you.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** First, I'd like to thank the member from Essex for introducing his private member's bill, the Bone Marrow Awareness Month Act, 2007, and most importantly, to thank Joanne and Bryan Bedard for their inspiration to all of us and for their very informative website.

I would like to take a broader approach to this very special month. This discussion provides us with the opportunity to think of healthy living. First, we should appreciate the miracle of our own body, and second, we



should find ways to protect this miracle and to maintain and develop ways to create healthy and well-adjusted bodies. But as you know, this Legislature, this place, does not lend itself very much to appreciating our health. We just simply take it for granted, because there are so many meetings around here, so many things to do. While I'm fairly aware of what it takes to maintain my body in perfect health, I'm also aware, because of our situation here, that many times there are too many meetings. Many times, of course, I find myself in a position of wolfing down a sandwich laden with hydrogenated fats and other terrible things that are destructive to the cells in my body.

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In fact we are surrounded here, as was said at one time, by lots of negativism—called “nabobs of negativism.” I know that does not lend itself to great development of healthy cells. In fact, even this morning I got some knives in my front and I got some knives in my back. In fact, my colleague will help me take them out of the back, right? As you know, Joanne and Bryan, this whole lifestyle here really doesn't lend itself to very healthy living. So it's important to know that there are also positive sides to being here.

I'm fortunate to sit next to the member from Ottawa Centre, who frequently discusses with me ways we can guard against the destruction of healthy cells. Did you know, for instance, that every 35 to 38 days you grow a new layer of skin? Every two to three years your body creates a new liver—all new cells. Every 10 to 15 years, depending on your DNA, you regenerate a whole new body, except for some of the cells found in the bones. Wow, to me that is mind-blowing when I think about it.

**Mr. Crozier:** We need a new body.

**Mr. Ruprecht:** My colleague says that yes, we do need new bodies—healthy cells up there; that's right.

In fact, since our body is a protein-producing mechanism and cells are constantly dying and new cells are born, it would make sense to determine the most effective way to strengthen our immune system. To have good health, we can look at certain things. We can look to Canada's Food Guide for a proper diet: Go easy on fats and sugars and watch for spoiled food. Increase the amounts of fruits, vegetables and grains. The sandwich I wolfed down yesterday didn't have any grains, didn't have any positive aspects to it, or vegetables and fruit. It was just wolfing down something because there is no time. Vitamins and minerals are important. Foods may be lacking in them.

Physical exercise is a must. Aerobics, walking, cycling, even dancing, and getting enough sleep are all very important to the healthy, cell-producing mechanisms. In fact, I introduced a private member's bill just last week outlawing adjusting mufflers so that cars and motorcycles can't wake up a whole neighbourhood by increasing the decibel levels.

There is, of course, another aspect and dimension to becoming a healthy person. This new aspect talks about our emotions that are influencing our health. For instance, meditation, faith in God, laughter, imagery, auto-

suggestion and biofeedback are all important. If you're still not convinced of the powerful influence on your body of one simple thought, think of the last time you blushed. Imagine this: Within a split second, your whole body is subject to a chemical shower and your face turns hot and red.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ruprecht:** Maybe not you, but this is true.

Just imagine what we can do, then, in terms of some positive actions. Some simple positive thought in your body can create a chemical shower of a positive nature.

To make a long story short—and my time is running out very quickly here—I just want to leave you with this one thought: We want to thank you for attending today's session, and especially the member from Essex. All of us will support this bill because you have inspired us, and we will do whatever we can to ensure its quick passage.

**The Acting Speaker:** I recognize the member for Burlington.

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington):** I am really pleased to stand up and take part in the debate on Bill 225, the bone marrow donation month act. This is an age of miracles in science. We used to think of and pray for miracles, but now science actually provides us with miracles. Bone marrow transplants are just one such scientific miracle.

Creating awareness in the general population is so extremely important because it's human nature, as we're busy in our own lives and dashing about, going to work and looking after our families, that we have to learn about issues through general public information. We don't often go and seek out information about issues like this unless we're confronted directly in our own families or our own friends' lives. So unless it touches us, it sometimes goes neglected. I really appreciate that the member from Essex has taken the time to provide us with such thorough information that's so easily understood, that has captured all our interests and that I certainly feel is an important issue to raise with the general public.

It's also important to understand that ethnicity plays a large part in transplant success. That's something I personally did not know about until I read the information. I thought a marrow transplant was a marrow transplant, but in fact it is not. To reach out to as many ethnic groups as possible to make it understood that the success of such transplants is sometimes dependent on their ethnicity is a very important part of this information.

It's incumbent on us as community leaders. People look to us for advice, for information, and we should make all aspects of this issue fully known and, most importantly, easy to understand for the general public. In a decent society, what we do is help our fellow man. This is certainly one of those ways. It's no different, in my opinion, than creating awareness about organ donation, cancer, heart and stroke, or any of the awareness we create in the public to allow people to live a fuller, healthier life, with nothing more than just information, and that's what this is.



The information that's being presented has the potential to alter lives, both for the donor and for the recipient. I think that's a really important aspect to remember. You know—but for the grace of God go I—we never know when adversity will touch us, our family, our friends. This could be one of those instances, when somebody close to us needs a bone marrow transplant. Having the awareness out in the public, creating the website and making the month of November Bone Marrow Awareness Month provides the kind of awareness to the public that we know people will take up in our generous society of Canadians.

I want to thank the member from Essex once again for bringing forward this information and for presenting it in such a thorough way, for creating a positive out of a negative. I too am in support of expediting this into law.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** It is indeed a privilege to have the opportunity to give a few remarks this morning on Bill 225, An Act to make the month of November Bone Marrow Awareness Month here in Ontario. In life's journey, there's nothing more devastating than the loss of a child. We salute the amazing courage of Bryan and Joanne Bedard to be with us in the members' gallery today to talk about the issue of creating a month in Ontario to recognize bone marrow awareness.

When you look at the Canadian Blood Services registry today, we have more than 215,000 Canadians who have taken advantage of registering with the Canadian Blood Services to provide that opportunity, to provide the miracle of life, to others within our society. But when you think of that 215,000 for a moment, there should be many more Ontarians and Canadians who take the time to register with the Canadian Blood Services. When you think of a population across Canada of some 33 million people and here in Ontario between 12 million and 13 million people, there should be many more who would take the opportunity to look at the significant contribution that they could make to medical science by taking the time to register with the Canadian Blood Services.

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In this era of medical advances, bone marrow is something that can be donated to others to sustain life and to provide a positive outlook of sustaining one's life over a very long period of time. When you think of the opportunity we have here today, and I'm sure people are watching across Ontario—we have an opportunity this morning to do something that I think is very unique and will transcend when all of us have left this place: the opportunity to create the awareness of the need to register for bone marrow transplants. When you look through it, it's a fairly easy process. One would register one's name, go in and do some preliminary testing, and then, after that, would provide a donation and information to make sure that that information is readily available through the blood services when needed to provide that life-giving bone marrow.

And indeed, there's a need in Ontario and Canada today as we have this great ethnic diversity, the thing that makes Ontario and Canada such a rich nation as it is.

There is a real need to have many more from the various ethnic groups across the province of Ontario, indeed throughout Canada, take the time to register. When you think of some of our communities today, for example, Markham, Ontario, for 60% of the people who live in Markham today, English is not their first language. So it reflects the diversity of our community and the diversity of Ontario, and it reflects the need, that we have to have many more citizens of this province come forward and register so that they can give bone marrow when it is needed, when the situation occurs.

The tragic loss of a child sometimes provides the opportunity for something great and positive to happen. That's why I want to salute Bryan and Joanne Bedard this morning for taking the very tragic and incomprehensible situation of the death of a child to launch something here today so that we could heighten awareness of the need to register for bone marrow. I salute my colleague the member for Essex who has taken the time to bring this bill forward this morning. We can do something very great by passing this bill as quickly as possible to make this November the first month for bone marrow awareness in the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to stand up in the remaining 37 seconds that are left in private members' time to let the member for Essex know that I completely support his private member's bill to make November Bone Marrow Awareness Month. I think raising awareness with the goal of getting more people to participate in the registry is a good thing that will help save lives. I completely support the member with this private member's bill, and I hope he can get unanimous consent with all three parties to see this bill passed, because I think it could do some good.

**The Acting Speaker:** I believe that concludes the time for private members' business on this ballot item.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker:** I apologize. The member for Essex has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Crozier:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I want to thank you personally for standing in for me this morning, and doing such a great job, to allow me to debate this private member's bill.

I want to thank the members from Kitchener–Waterloo, Beaches–East York, London North Centre, Haliburton–Victoria–Brock, Parkdale–High Park, Davenport, Burlington, Peterborough, Parry Sound–Muskoka and others who have indicated their support for this bill.

I especially want to say a very warm thank you to Joanne and Bryan for coming this morning so that they can see how sincerely we can feel about a subject and a debate in this House. I told them earlier today, when we had a bit of a tour, that it's a privilege to work in this place, an absolute privilege—and any time that anybody thinks it's a right, it's time for them to get out—that we can work together on issues and that when we aren't unanimous or when we aren't all in agreement, there are always, in my view, good reasons for that.



With that, I thank you for your support this morning. I look forward to your support when it comes to the vote and I will—once the vote is taken, and if successful—attempt to move this along quickly, as each of you has asked that I do. Thank you very much for your support this morning.

**The Acting Speaker:** That concludes all the time available for private members' public business.

#### VAUGHAN HOSPITAL

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Racco has moved private member's resolution number 10, private members' notice of motion number 63. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

#### BONE MARROW AWARENESS MONTH ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR LE MOIS DE LA SENSIBILISATION AU DON DE MOELLE OSSEUSE

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Crozier has moved second reading of Bill 225, An Act to make the month of November Bone Marrow Awareness Month. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I would seek unanimous consent that the bill be ordered for third reading.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Essex is seeking the unanimous consent of the House that the bill be ordered for third reading. Is there such consent? Agreed.

All matters relating to private members' public business having now been completed, I do now leave the chair. The House will resume at 1:30 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1158 to 1330.*

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** On April 13, 2006, the Minister of Health announced that his government would expedite patient access to drugs through rapid reviews of breakthrough therapies. This announcement prompted Nick and Sonia Lanese of Fonthill to seek the government's help for their son Andrew. Although Andrew is but 10 years old, he has endured a life afflicted by a rare genetic disorder called MPS II, otherwise known as Hunter's syndrome. The disorder left Andrew in a very uncomfortable state, as it has dramatically impacted his mental capacity.

However, there is treatment, namely Elaprase, an enzyme-replacement therapy that may be able to lessen some of the symptoms of this disorder. Andrew's parents asked the government for funding for this drug. On May

9, they disappointingly received a letter informing them that their son Andrew had been denied funding by the government.

In an article in the Welland Tribune, Mr. Lanese says that the review "never gave Andrew a chance." I ask the Minister of Health today to give 10-year-old Andrew a chance and to provide funding for this enzyme-replacement therapy to relieve his debilitating symptoms.

I ask the minister today to commit to provide bridge funding for this therapy until a national drug policy is put in place.

#### STREETSVILLE BREAD AND HONEY FESTIVAL

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** This is the weekend of the Streetsville Bread and Honey Festival. The Streetsville Bread and Honey Festival features activities for everyone, including baking contests, a huge parade on Saturday morning, children's crafts, a fishing derby and, of course, my personal favourite, the Sunday morning pancake breakfast, in which my constituents can have me clean up their tables for them.

Every year, I look forward to participating in the entire Streetsville Bread and Honey Festival, from Saturday morning to Sunday evening, and not just dropping by for a quick appearance.

The bread and honey festival plays a large role in supporting our local community in north Mississauga. All proceeds from the weekend are directed back into the community by the Rotary Club, which does an absolutely fabulous job and supports such projects as Easter Seals, the Vic Johnston Community Centre, Cheshire Homes and the Credit Valley Hospital, among many others.

The bread and honey festival has been held annually on the first weekend of June since 1973. The festival originated in 1973 through the promotion committee of the town of Streetsville. Each year at the festival, everybody enjoys bread baked specially by local milling companies and generously coated with lots and lots of local honey, hence the name.

I look forward to the festival to taste the bread and honey and, more importantly, to spend two full days with as many of my constituents as choose to come by my booth in the arena and say hello to me.

#### KIDS' FISHING DAY

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I'd like to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to all groups and volunteers who worked so hard for the seventh annual Kids' Fishing Day at Heber Down Conservation Area this last Saturday.

What a wonderful, rewarding day it was for both children and adults alike. A crowd about 10% larger than last year came out to enjoy the sun and the great outdoors. Children were able to take part, at no charge, in a day filled with many events, including conservation and

wetland displays, lure making, face painting, a casting competition, fishing and, of course, fish identification.

Ducks Unlimited; MPP John O'Toole; Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority; Kids, Cops and Canadian Tire; Muskies Canada; Ministry of Natural Resources, Aurora district; Ontario Sporting Dog Association; Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Zone E; Oshawa Community Health Centre; Oshawa Teen Council; Oshawa YWCA; Durham regional police; Pickering Rod and Gun Club; the Christ Centre; Hawgtown Bassmasters; Eastview Boys and Girls Club; Simcoe Hall Settlement House; South Central Ontario Big Game Association; the Westmount Kiwanis Club; and Orono Fish and Hunt Club all contributed time and effort to the great success of the event.

I'd like to extend my special thanks to our leader, John Tory, and his wife, Barbara, who took in the event and met with the young anglers and volunteers; and also the Toronto Sportsmen's Show, which, year after year, shows its dedication to Kids' Fishing Day. Most importantly, I'd like to thank all the parents and kids who participated.

It was a great opportunity for children who don't usually have the chance to learn about fishing and nature and have fun discovering the outdoors at the same time. Hundreds of rainbow trout were caught by the young anglers, but there are more still waiting.

Once again, I'd like to offer my sincere thanks to the many people who made this unforgettable day possible for the children of our community.

TENANT PROTECTION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** Hard-working families who rent in Ontario are fed up with a McGuinty government that is out of touch with their real issues and needs.

In Hamilton right now, two disabled tenants have been without electricity for 24 days. They paid for utilities as part of their monthly rent, but when the landlord failed to pass through those payments to the utility companies, they were out of luck. Similarly, two years ago, in the dead of winter, an entire building of tenants in my community had their gas services cut.

On February 21, 2005, I introduced a private member's bill that would prevent tenants who pay for rent and utilities together from being victimized by the disconnection of vital services like hydro, water and gas.

I sought the support of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for this. He offered platitudes and made promises to include my provisions as part of his new Tenant Protection Act. But, lo and behold—and no surprise—another McGuinty Liberal broken promise. When the government's legislation came forward, there was no trace of vital services language at all—notwithstanding that this one measure would really count for something with tenants, not only in the community of Hamilton but all across this province. Instead, the McGuinty government was happy to download respon-

sibilities for landlord and tenant issues on to overloaded, financially strapped municipalities. As a result, Ontario tenants still risk losing their vital services through no fault of their own.

A few cities like Hamilton have bylaws, but enforcing them is time-consuming and difficult without the teeth that my bill would have guaranteed them. Ontario legal aid clinics agreement with me. Too bad the minister doesn't.

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ENERGY CONSERVATION

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** I am proud to announce that last week in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh plans were unveiled for the construction of Place Dominion Place, the region's first green, sustainable building.

This state-of-the-art facility will be located in downtown Cornwall, at the corner of Pitt and Second Streets, probably the most visible intersection in the city. It will serve as an example that you can make the commitment of being environmentally friendly while providing high-quality services and displaying acute business sense.

This four-storey structure will be built in accordance with the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program, with the goal of achieving the highest-possible rating under the green building rating system. This structure will be certified to meet high targets for green buildings in this province. It will house retail and professional space while providing a classic, yet modern, look to our downtown core. It is a testament to the renaissance taking place throughout my riding.

I am proud that citizens of my community have taken a leadership role in the preservation of our environment. This is proof of the hope, vision and foresight of my constituents and their interest in a prosperous and healthy future for their families and community for generations to come.

My congratulations go out to local entrepreneur Ron Chenier and his development partners, Dick and Chris Markell of Bourgon and Associates, who are moving this dream to reality. These gentlemen have established a benchmark for all future construction in the region in the hopes that developers will realize that an environmentally sustainable community is important for our well-being, for our economy and for the future of the province.

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** Yesterday, Dalton McGuinty joined Governor Schwarzenegger to pump up Ontario. He posed for so many photo ops, you'd think he was on the red carpet at the Oscars. We know that back in 2003, Dalton McGuinty was quite pumped up from waving around his big red book of broken promises. The minute he became Premier, he began turning his back on the environment. It's nearly four years later and he still has not presented a plan for climate change, and the coal plants are still spewing out the same emissions he promised to end.

Yesterday morning, while the Premier was in front of the cameras at Queen's Park, pretending to care about



climate change and reducing emissions, away from the cameras, there was an entourage of no less than 10 vehicles, most of them SUVs, idling the entire time—idling and ready for a quick getaway to MaRS—not the Mars from the famous blockbuster movie *Total Recall*, but the MaRS Discovery District research centre, which is only a few blocks away. I'm actually surprised the Premier didn't want to have taxpayers' money pay for the short flight there. Evidently, MaRS has no landing ramp.

What's even worse, these vehicles were outside of Queen's Park, idling and spewing emissions on the very same day the Premier's Minister of the Environment issued a smog warning in Toronto and throughout the province.

It's clear that in Dalton McGuinty's world, he's got his act well rehearsed and has memorized his lines, "Do as I say, not as I do." John Tory is a true leader, who has presented a plan on climate change with real targets and a real plan to deliver on those targets. What has Dalton McGuinty presented? We're quite certain that, with all his broken promises, Dalton McGuinty won't hesitate to join Arnold Schwarzenegger for the filming of the movie *True Lies*, part two.

#### ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS AND TECHNOLOGISTS

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa—Orléans):** The Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists will mark its 50th anniversary this June. As a former consulting engineer and full member of the professional engineering organization, it is my pleasure to tell the House about OACETT. It is a non-profit, self-governing organization with more than 20,000 members across Ontario.

This association promotes the interests of engineering and applied science technicians and technologists in industry, educational institutions, the public and government. For 50 years, it has upheld a tradition of protecting public safety by certifying its members, many of whom are graduates from the provincial college system. In its first 40 years, the association processed more than 53,000 applications for certification.

All of the certified technicians and technologists in our province, who cover a wide range of engineering disciplines, have contributed greatly to the economic growth of Ontario. What's also noteworthy is that this organization has, from its beginning, measured and recognized the credentials of internationally trained professionals arriving in Ontario, helping them and helping our economy. This has made a difference for many of these new Canadians. From 2000 to 2004, 6,836 self-identified engineering technicians and technologists emigrated to Ontario.

One of the many ways the OACETT has helped foreign-trained professionals has been through the bridge training programs, language training, referrals, employment workshops, career mapping and many other ser-

vices. With this proud history, it is my pleasure to congratulate the OACETT for reaching its 50th anniversary and for the exceptional work it has done for the past 50 years.

#### CATTLE FARMERS

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Aldershot):** Where's the beef? On Tuesday, we welcomed the Ontario Cattlemen's Association to Queen's Park. I had the pleasure of meeting with Dan Darling and Jamie Boles for an update on the state of the industry.

The association has received positive response from members related to funding provided for regional marketing and our government efforts to encourage Ontarians to buy locally. Other initiatives have included delivering as much as \$410 million of federal-provincial funding for farmers and monies to an industry affected by BSE, some \$138 million coming directly from Ontario. We've also worked tirelessly to fully restore an open border with the US.

Investing \$7 million to expand our domestic slaughter capacity and the development of the new Elora beef barn in support of research projects have also helped our beef industry.

The cattlemen's recent report indicated that an overwhelming majority of Ontarians want to protect family farms and see us continue to support initiatives aimed at doubling beef production using existing infrastructure.

The beef sector makes an important contribution to our Ontario economy. Tremendous potential exists for continued economic growth and job creation, and our government is committed to continuing to work with the beef sector on long-term strategies to expand the industry so that its important potential can be realized.

#### CONSERVATION

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron—Bruce):** I rise in the House today to talk about some comments that the leader of the third party made yesterday in regard to our conservation initiatives. The member for Kenora—Rainy River called our government's conservation ads "superficial photo ops."

I would like to point out that Mr. David Suzuki, one of the world's leading authorities on climate change, is in those advertisements helping to promote energy conservation. My question to the leader of the third party is: Does he think that one of the leading authorities on climate change is superficial? I also want to know if the member from Toronto—Danforth feels the same way as his leader.

While the NDP may like to promote itself as an environmental party, environmental groups are less than impressed with their showing, like their flip-flop on the coal issue and the leader of the third party's avoiding the species-at-risk vote.

In contrast, the McGuinty Liberals have been moving forward with real results. Today, Ontario's over 400

megawatts of wind energy make us a leader in wind power in Canada. We have an innovative Endangered Species Act that makes us a North American leader in species at risk and recovery. We are also protecting 1.8 million acres of green space through our greenbelt initiative.

Instead of playing politics with the issue, we are committed to tackling climate change and will continue to move forward with real progress, together with Ontarians.

#### VISITOR

**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I am delighted to introduce to the assembly this afternoon Anne Marie Leonard, who is visiting for the first time. Anne Marie is one of the most accomplished musicians I know, a choral director and choral leader, and a wonderful person on top of that. Welcome, Anne Marie.

#### DARRELL PRIEDE

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline (Burlington):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I rise in the House to sadly inform you that the 56th Canadian soldier to die in Kandahar was from Burlington. Master Corporal Darrell Priede was a brave soldier who was a professional and who made the ultimate sacrifice.

We all live in a time of peace here in Canada, where we don't know what war is. I think it is commendable that our young men and women understand the responsibility of freedom and have gone off to corners of the world in order to help preserve our freedom.

My condolences to the family and friends of Master Corporal Priede, and thank you for this opportunity.

#### VISITORS

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to take the opportunity to welcome Maureen Kelly and son Liam, and Brian and Gail Todd from my riding of Northumberland. They're here today visiting to see democracy at work in this great province of Ontario. Welcome.

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to welcome to the assembly one of my favourite teachers from the mountain, Mary LaChapelle, who is also an executive at OECTA in Hamilton. Welcome.

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to introduce Richard Elliott, and I will be presenting petitions later on, on behalf of his son. Thank you for coming, Richard.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like, with your permission, to recognize in the visitors' gallery representatives of CANES Home Support Services from the great riding of Etobicoke North and environs.

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#### BIRTH OF MEMBER'S GRANDCHILD

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: As a proud grandfather, only a month ago I announced a new tiny Tory to Kingston, Ontario. That was Jordan Stearns.

I want to say to all members of the Legislature that my wife, Joan, and I have another tiny Tory, this time Jonas Fraser Stearns. I want to indicate that his mom, Dawn, and his dad, John, who is 42 years of age and this is his first child, are extremely proud and doing well.

Rest easy, McGuinty government. Unfortunately, this grandson lives in Edmonton, Alberta.

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto-Danforth):** I wish to recognize Mary Watts from the Toronto-Danforth riding, who this morning won the Senior Stars competition in Toronto.

#### WATER QUALITY

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg to inform the House that, further to my communication to occupants of the legislative precinct yesterday, I have now received the results of secondary testing on the assembly's potable water supply. Members may know that secondary testing is done to verify the integrity of preliminary readings.

I am pleased to report to the House that these secondary readings are well within the acceptable levels, to allay all concerns raised by the earlier testing. Notwithstanding the updated results, I have ordered the precautionary measures implemented yesterday to remain in force.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS AMENDMENT ACT, 2007 LOI DE 2007 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA SOCIÉTÉ DE PROTECTION DES ANIMAUX DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Runciman moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 232, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act / Projet de loi 232, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.



**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** These are probably modest amendments to the act but, I think, significant. They deal only with pet ownership of cats and dogs, prompted by horrific stories that we have all read in the media recently: cutting off a dog's ears to make it appear scary—those kinds of situations. What the amendments will do is allow for charges under the Provincial Offences Act of up to two years less a day, fines up to \$60,000 a year, and bans up to lifetime bans on pet ownership.

LABOUR RELATIONS  
AMENDMENT ACT  
(CERTIFIED TRADES), 2007

LOI DE 2007 MODIFIANT  
LA LOI SUR LES RELATIONS  
DE TRAVAIL (MÉTIERS AGRÉÉS)

Mr. Kormos moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 233, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 with respect to bargaining units in certified trades /  
Projet de loi 233, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail relativement aux unités de négociation représentant des métiers agréés.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I especially want to thank Jimmy Moffat from the sheet metal workers for his leadership. This bill amends the Labour Relations Act, 1995, to restrict who may take part in a representation vote where the bargaining unit consists of employees who work in a certified trade; specifically, that if a bargaining unit consists of employees who work in a certified trade under the Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act, an employee who is not the holder of a subsisting certificate of qualification for the trade or apprenticeship in the trade shall not take part in the representation vote.

MOTIONS

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I move that an humble address be presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council as follows—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** First we'd need to agree to unanimous consent to present the motion.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** I don't believe so.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** Well, then, I seek unanimous consent to move a motion.

**The Speaker:** Mr. Caplan has asked for unanimous consent. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** The motion reads as follows:

"To the Lieutenant Governor in Council:

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, request the appointment of a person to be named by agreement of the panel of members of this assembly currently struck for that purpose, chaired by the Honourable Michael Brown and composed of Mr. Patten, Mrs. Witmer and Ms. Martel, as the chief medical officer of health for the province of Ontario as provided in section 81(1) of the Health Protection and Promotion Act, RSO 1990, chapter H.7 to hold office under the terms and conditions of the said act commencing on the date to be determined by the aforementioned panel," and that the address be engrossed and presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council by the Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

ACTING CHIEF  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I request unanimous consent to move a motion regarding the acting chief medical officer of health, an extension of the appointment.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Caplan asks for unanimous consent to present a motion regarding the acting chief medical officer of health. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** I move that an humble address be presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council as follows:

"To the Lieutenant Governor in Council:

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, request the extension of the appointment of Dr. George Pasut as the acting chief medical officer of health for the province of Ontario as provided in section 81(1) of the Health Protection and Promotion Act, RSO 1990, chapter H.7 and section 28(L) of the Interpretation Act, RSO 1990, chapter I.11, to hold office until December 31, 2007 or until the Legislative Assembly appoints a permanent chief medical officer of health, whichever is earlier, having all the same powers and duties of the chief medical officer of health under the Health Protection and Promotion Act," and that the address be engrossed and presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council by the Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

1400

INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):**

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to move a motion regarding the Integrity Commissioner.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** I move that an humble address be presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council as follows:

“To the Lieutenant Governor in Council:

“We, Her Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, request the appointment of a person, to be named by agreement of the panel of members of this assembly currently struck for that purpose, chaired by the Honourable Michael Brown and composed of Ms. Smith, Mr. Sterling and Mr. Prue, as the Integrity Commissioner for the province of Ontario, as provided in section 23 of the Members’ Integrity Act, 1994, S.O. 1994, chapter 38, to hold office under the terms and conditions of the said act commencing on the date to be determined by the aforementioned panel,” and that the address be engrossed and presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council by the Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### IPPERWASH PROVINCIAL PARK PARC PROVINCIAL IPPERWASH

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** It will be 12 years this summer since the events at Ipperwash park; 12 years since the George family lost their son and brother, Dudley; 12 years since the Kettle and Stoney Point First Nations lost a member of their community and a friend; 12 years since a dark shadow was cast over the relationship between aboriginal people and the government of Ontario.

Today, thanks to the work of Justice Sidney Linden at the Ipperwash public inquiry, new light has been shed on those events. In the days and weeks to come, I am certain that many people will pore over the contents of Justice Linden’s report—scrutinizing it, studying it, commenting on it. That is not my intention today. I do not rise in the House to speak about what the report says but rather to speak about what the report means. This report speaks to something profound, even historic.

Il parle d’un désir commun, parmi nous tous, de guérison, de réconciliation et d’un nouveau début.

It speaks to a shared desire among us all for healing, for reconciliation and for a new beginning.

Nothing can fully heal the pain that Dudley George’s family and friends have felt for more than a decade now. Nothing can change the events that took place 12 sum-

mers ago or fully erase the scar this has left on the history of aboriginal relationships for all who live here.

Earlier today I spoke with Sam George, Dudley George’s brother, and I want to now say publicly what I said to him privately: On behalf of the people of Ontario, we apologize for the events that led to the loss of life. We deeply regret the death of Dudley George. This report and the implementation of its recommendations will serve as a testament to his memory. We will honour his life as we move forward with Ontario’s aboriginal community.

I believe that we have within our grasp today the power to change our future, to create deep and lasting change, because this report is more than a record of the events that occurred; it is a source of wise counsel for the future. That future is ours to build, starting today. It begins with an understanding that if we want a lasting partnership built on respect, a future where all our children can enjoy the full benefits of life here in Ontario, the greatest province in the most blessed country in the world, then we must together embrace the same fundamental goal. That goal is opportunity: the opportunity for all of us to succeed in life, to achieve our potential, to flourish, to be happy. We must embrace a fundamental truth, one so vitally important to our success as a diverse society. That truth is this: When it comes to people, what matters most is not the colour of our skin; it’s not the language we speak; it’s not the culture we embrace; it’s not the traditions we cherish; it’s not the faith that we practise; it’s not the power we wield or the wealth that we accumulate. What matters most is our common humanity, that sense that we’re all in this together and that real progress means we must all move forward together. That sentiment, that value, is the foundation of a strong partnership.

Guidé par le rapport du juge Linden, notre gouvernement va continuer de travailler en partenariat avec les leaders autochtones pour établir de nouvelles relations et collaborations constructives.

Guided by Justice Linden’s report, our government will continue to work in partnership with the aboriginal leadership to chart a new course for a constructive and co-operative relationship. That relationship will be based on respect and responsibility. I believe this is key to building a better future for all aboriginal people, and indeed all Ontarians, as is open, two-way communication. Our government is committed to meaningful discussions with aboriginal leaders, because we believe it is vital for both sides to have a forum to discuss opportunities and overcome challenges together. Our government will work closely with the aboriginal leadership and the federal government to review the Ipperwash Inquiry Report and develop an action plan for carrying out the report’s recommendations.

I am proud that one of our government’s first actions was to appoint an independent inquiry into the sad events of September 6, 1995, and I am grateful it has resulted in the release of this report today. I’m proud, too, that in three and a half years in government, we have charted a new course for a constructive, co-operative relationship



with the aboriginal peoples of Ontario, a relationship that is sustained by mutual respect and a sincere effort to better understand one another.

Ensemble, réaffirmons notre engagement et notre détermination à renforcer cette nouvelle relation de telle sorte qu'ensemble, nous pourrions profiter des bienfaits de ce partenariat durable.

Together, let us affirm our commitment and determination to strengthen this new relationship so that together we can reap the rewards of this lasting partnership.

Speaker, it was the Shawnee Chief Tecumseh, a hero to all Canadians—a man who, by the way, played a decisive role in the War of 1812—who once said, “A single twig breaks, but the bundle of twigs is strong.” This day, let us resolve to be strong by moving forward together. Let us heal the wounds of the past and build a brighter future. Together, let us build a stronger, more unified Ontario for all Ontarians.

1410

**Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby–Ajax):** I wish to respond by reading the following statement from our leader, John Tory, with respect to Commissioner Linden's report on the Ipperwash inquiry:

“I would like to thank Commissioner Linden for his work in putting together this thoughtful, detailed report. The death of Dudley George was a tragic event, and we must do everything possible to prevent an incident like this in the future.

“It is clear that all governments and everyone involved in land claim discussions and aboriginal issues must do a better job. I strongly believe we must do better, and we will continue pushing for both improved relations with our aboriginal community and an improved approach to dealing with situations that arise from land claims.

“This report puts forth many thoughtful recommendations, and we are going to give it the careful consideration and thoughtful review it deserves. The goal for all political and aboriginal leaders coming out of this report must be to turn the corner on aboriginal relations in a productive and compassionate manner.

“We need the tools to work towards reconciliation. We need the tools to ensure justice and fairness to aboriginal peoples and to make the changes to existing discriminatory policies and systems that impede us. We need the tools to say to aboriginal people [that] the place to work out our issues is at the negotiating table. We need the tools to develop reconciliation and understanding between aboriginal peoples and other citizens of Ontario and all of Canada.

“We support the Premier's apology on behalf of the government and people of Ontario. I hope that both the apology and the release of this report will bring a measure of closure” and peace to the George family.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** On behalf of New Democrats, I want to thank Judge Linden for his very thoughtful and exhaustive report. We also want to express our condolences to the George family, especially to Sam George, because of his courage and his

persistence, and to express to them that the job has just begun.

The report of Judge Linden contains many useful and helpful recommendations. I had hoped that we would hear from the Premier today a commitment on the part of the McGuinty government to begin implementing those recommendations, because most of the recommendations are directly within the ambit and responsibility of the provincial government and are recommendations that do not need a great deal of study. For example:

“The provincial government should establish a permanent, independent and impartial agency to facilitate and oversee the settling of land and treaty claims in Ontario. The agency should be called the Treaty Commission of Ontario....

“The Ministry of Natural Resources should establish a public complaints process,” because, in fact, the Ministry of Natural Resources has the closest ongoing relationship with aboriginal people in the province.

“The Ministry of Education should establish formal working relationships with aboriginal organizations to promote more aboriginal perspectives and content in the elementary and secondary school curricula....

“The provincial government should create a ministry of aboriginal affairs. This ministry should have a dedicated minister and its own deputy minister.”

These are all recommendations directly to the government. I would suggest that, given the events of the last 12 years, they do not require study. What they require is an action plan, here and now.

In fact, the situation with Ontario First Nations is not getting better. Judge Linden refers to this in his report where he says: “Disputes over natural resource development between aboriginal peoples, governments and third parties have led to many aboriginal occupations and protests. The recent incident involving Kitchenuhmaykoosib First Nation at Big Trout Lake in northern Ontario is an example of the growing tension over natural resources in that region.”

If I may, that is something where this government has failed to act. In fact, if you quote from the judge who heard the recent court decision, he makes the point that a very poor First Nation, a First Nation where 85% of the people are unemployed, had to go to court to fight a \$10-billion lawsuit from a mining exploration company because this government had given the mining company a mining exploration permit without properly consulting the First Nation, as is required by the constitutional law of Canada. Now that First Nation has a \$650,000 legal bill. Why? Because they were forced to do what this government should have done: ensure, under the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada, that the First Nation was properly consulted and accommodated before any mining exploration licence or permit dealing with their territorial lands was given to a company.

So I say to the Premier: We thank Judge Linden for his report, we congratulate Sam George for his courage and his tenacity, but much needs to be done now, Premier. The conflicts continue. In fact, some of the activities of the McGuinty government have furthered and

caused those conflicts, and so the action plan needs to be here and now and it needs to be acted on here and now. Otherwise, we will continue to see, this summer and into the following year, more conflicts and more potential for conflicts, which I think none of us in Ontario want to see, which says, again, the time to act is now. The time to study is over. Where's the action plan?

## DEFERRED VOTES

### STRENGTHENING BUSINESS THROUGH A SIMPLER TAX SYSTEM ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 VISANT À RENFORCER LES ENTREPRISES GRÂCE À UN RÉGIME FISCAL PLUS SIMPLE

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 174, An Act to enact the Taxation Act, 2007 and make complementary and other amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 174, Loi édictant la Loi de 2007 sur les impôts et apportant des modifications complémentaires et autres à diverses lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1417 to 1422.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Racco, Mario G.
Arthurs, Wayne	Jeffrey, Linda	Ramal, Khalil
Balkissoon, Bas	Klees, Frank	Ramsay, David
Bartolucci, Rick	Kular, Kuldip	Rinaldi, Lou
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kwinter, Monte	Runciman, Robert W.
Bountrogianni, Marie	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Broten, Laurel C.	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Brownell, Jim	Levac, Dave	Savoline, Joyce
Bryant, Michael	Marsales, Judy	Scott, Laurie
Cansfield, Donna H.	Matthews, Deborah	Sergio, Mario
Caplan, David	McGuinty, Dalton	Smith, Monique
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	McMeekin, Ted	Smitherman, George
Chan, Michael	McNeely, Phil	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Colle, Mike	Meilleur, Madeleine	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Miller, Norm	Tascona, Joseph N.
Di Cocco, Caroline	Mitchell, Carol	Watson, Jim
Dombrowsky, Leona	Munro, Julia	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	Ouellette, Jerry J.	Wilson, Jim
Duncan, Dwight	Peters, Steve	Witmer, Elizabeth
Elliott, Christine	Phillips, Gerry	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fonseca, Peter	Pupatello, Sandra	Zimmer, David
Gerretsen, John	Qaadri, Shafiq	

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

DiNovo, Cheri	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Hampton, Howard	Marchese, Rosario	
Horwath, Andrea	Martel, Shelley	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):**  
The ayes are 65; the nays are 7.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

## SAFEGUARDING AND SUSTAINING ONTARIO'S WATER ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 SUR LA SAUVEGARDE ET LA DURABILITÉ DES EAUX DE L'ONTARIO

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 198, An Act to amend the Ontario Water Resources Act to safeguard and sustain Ontario's water, to make related amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 and to repeal the Water Transfer Control Act / Projet de loi 198, Loi visant à modifier la Loi sur les ressources en eau de l'Ontario afin d'assurer la sauvegarde et la durabilité des eaux de l'Ontario, à apporter des modifications connexes à la Loi de 2002 sur la salubrité de l'eau potable et à abroger la Loi sur le contrôle des transferts d'eau.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1426 to 1431.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Horwath, Andrea	Qaadri, Shafiq
Arthurs, Wayne	Jeffrey, Linda	Racco, Mario G.
Balkissoon, Bas	Klees, Frank	Ramal, Khalil
Bartolucci, Rick	Kormos, Peter	Ramsay, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kular, Kuldip	Rinaldi, Lou
Bountrogianni, Marie	Kwinter, Monte	Runciman, Robert W.
Broten, Laurel C.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Brownell, Jim	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Bryant, Michael	Levac, Dave	Savoline, Joyce
Cansfield, Donna H.	Marchese, Rosario	Scott, Laurie
Caplan, David	Marsales, Judy	Sergio, Mario
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	Martel, Shelley	Smith, Monique
Chan, Michael	Matthews, Deborah	Smitherman, George
Colle, Mike	McGuinty, Dalton	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Delaney, Bob	McMeekin, Ted	Tabuns, Peter
Di Cocco, Caroline	McNeely, Phil	Takhar, Harinder S.
DiNovo, Cheri	Meilleur, Madeleine	Tascona, Joseph N.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Miller, Norm	Watson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	Mitchell, Carol	Wilkinson, John
Duncan, Dwight	Munro, Julia	Wilson, Jim
Elliott, Christine	Peters, Steve	Witmer, Elizabeth
Fonseca, Peter	Phillips, Gerry	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Gerretsen, John	Prue, Michael	Zimmer, David
Hardeman, Ernie	Pupatello, Sandra	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):**  
The ayes are 71; the nays are 0.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### YOUTH SERVICES

**Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby-Ajax):** My question is for the Premier. Yesterday Lauren Small called on the McGuinty government to make sure that her son Jordan



Manners did not die in vain. The family is calling for an inquest to find out what happened at the school on the day that Jordan Manners was killed. The Attorney General said yesterday that it was up to the coroner to decide whether or not to hold an inquest, yet the Coroner's Act clearly states that the minister can direct that an inquest be held. The Attorney General has also said that he fully supports everything that the family is calling for.

My question for the Premier is this: Will he heed the call of Laureen Small and ask the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services to call an inquest into Jordan Manners's death?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm pleased to take the question and to say, first of all, because I have not had the opportunity to do so in this Legislature, that I want to offer my sympathy to Jordan's mother, to his family, to his school community and to all those who have been affected and touched by this tragedy.

I can also say that my office has had communication with representatives of Ms. Small. I can say that it's my intention to speak personally with her later today to hear from her directly with respect to her wishes in this regard. But I must say that I have a real interest, not so much in the notion of a coroner's inquest, but rather perhaps in some broader look at what we might do together, all levels of government and the community as well, to ensure that we can prevent this kind of tragedy from happening again.

**Mrs. Elliott:** The family of Jordan Manners has called for an inquest, and I hope that you will certainly take that into consideration in your deliberations. The family is also calling for the appointment of a youth commissioner. Our leader, John Tory, has said many times that we need better coordination in delivering services for youth and families. A youth commissioner is someone who could take on this critically important task. My question again is, does the Premier have any plans to appoint a youth commissioner who can look at the broader issues affecting our youth and children to bring some resolution to this present situation?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** You know, that might be something that is worth pursuing. I'm not convinced of that just yet though. I know that the member understands that we have, for the first time ever in Ontario, a minister and a ministry devoted to the needs, concerns and aspirations of young people, and we're proud of putting that in place.

We have, I would argue, done many things to increase opportunities for young people to grow up safe and secure. But obviously, given the fact that these incidents do occur from time to time, there is more work to be done, which is, frankly, why I have an interest in this proposal. I think it's still kind of in a preliminary stage and we would have to work together to lend some shape to it. What is it that we might do by taking kind of a macro look at conditions which lead to this violence and what further responsibility ought we to assume—all of us, federal, provincial, municipal governments, community organizations and our police—to stem this tide?

**Mrs. Elliott:** Yesterday, the Governor of California talked about the importance of parties working together to produce solutions on important issues such as environmental issues, so I'm certainly very pleased to hear the Premier say that he is interested in working together with all parties to provide a meaningful solution to youth violence.

In December 2005, our leader, John Tory, produced Time for Action, which is a fulsome report concerning youth violence and some solutions that could be considered with respect to this matter. He has offered several times to work with the Premier but so far hasn't been taken up on his offer. I would ask the Premier, are you prepared to consider working with all of the members of this House to provide meaningful solutions to this very serious issue of youth violence?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** We are always open to good advice, good counsel with respect to how we can manage these kinds of challenges. But I say to my colleague opposite that I think she would see that much of Mr. Tory's advice has, in fact, been incorporated in many of the things that we've done, whether it's the strengthening of our safe schools legislation, the investments in our new guns and gangs strategy or the considerable investment made in education. We have 1,900 more teachers working in our high schools. We have student success teachers who are devoted to seeking out young people who are at risk of dropping out and seeking out those who have already dropped out, our new learning-to-18 program, our youth challenge fund and our investment in faith groups as well.

I think we have in place a pretty comprehensive approach, working with so many of our community partners, but there is always more to do. I acknowledge that.

1440

## WATER QUALITY

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** My question is to the Premier. People have been saying for years that there must be something in the water at Queen's Park, and yesterday we found out there were concerns that might be true. Over a month ago, the London Free Press reported test results that showed elevated levels of lead in the water. The government said they didn't believe it. When it was reconfirmed, they said it was restricted to London. When it was reported in Hamilton, they said that maybe communities should test the water, but it was up to them. They said they didn't have the power to compel mandatory testing, but then, some weeks later, they found the power and issued a directive for woefully inadequate testing in 36 communities across the province. It's as if the Keystone Cops are running the Ministry of the Environment.

My question for the Premier is, why did it take so long for this government to recognize there was a problem, and why, even when they did do something, was it so inadequate?



**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** Let me assure this House that I am not going to take any advice, when it comes to ensuring that we have safe, clean water in this province, from the party that left a legacy of issues with respect to water in this province. Let me assure the members that the Ministry of the Environment has been working very closely with communities since this very important issue arose in the community of London.

On April 20, immediately upon learning about the situation, the chief drinking water inspector, our primary adviser on water matters in the province, became involved. We provided drinking water inspectors to the community of London. On April 26, we engaged and put forward a new document from the federal government with respect to how we might be better able to improve our standards right across this country. And every single day we have been working to resolve this issue.

**Ms. Scott:** I wonder, when the minister answers like that, why she hasn't brought in the regulations for Bill 175 that would get the municipalities to take inventory and stock of the infrastructure that delivers the water to these houses. Here's what the testing order from the government states: Select 20 single-family homes. "The samples must be taken after a timed five-minute period of moderate flushing." Now here's what the proposed guidelines from Health Canada say. It's not just me; Health Canada says the initial sample should be "taken at the consumer's cold drinking water tap after the water has been stagnant for at least six hours"—no flushing. The initial sample should be taken at 100 monitoring sites.

The proposed guidelines have been posted by the McGuinty government on the Environmental Bill of Rights registry for consultation. The chief drinking water inspector even referred to them in his letter of April 27, 2007, to the municipalities. My question for the minister is this: It's a serious issue. Why wouldn't the government follow the stricter guidelines so that we can get a more accurate picture of what's going on with the water in the province? It's a simple question.

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** My primary responsibility is to protect the health and safety of Ontarians. That's exactly what we're doing. We're undertaking, in accordance with the order of the chief drinking water inspector, a test case around the province to determine the extent of the problem and identify solutions. We are working with experts that we have retained, North-America-wide experts who are giving us advice, and we are out there looking to determine what communities have lead issues, what communities have corrosive water, what communities have high pH levels. That's the type of information that the experts we've retained to assist us to get to the bottom of this issue tell us they need. That's the information we will have available to us by June 6. Let me tell you, we will get to the bottom of this issue by seeking advice from experts around the world.

**Ms. Scott:** The substance of the issue here before us is serious concerns about the quality of tap water in communities across the province. The tests, once they were ordered, don't even meet the new guidelines that are up for consultation. They don't meet the standards used in the United States. We now know that we're affected here, but the order from this government only requires testing in private dwellings. What about our schools, our hospitals and our other public institutions?

Will the minister take this seriously, order testing of the water in line with the proposed Health Canada guidelines, and will she do the same thing for our schools and hospitals?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** I can tell you once again that we are taking advice from the most renowned experts in North America, who are helping us understand the circumstances that we have found in the community of London. We are working to collect results that will help them give us the best advice possible. I can tell you that the steps we are taking are being recognized as the prudent and responsible steps to take.

Let me give you a quote from another water expert, Anastasia Lintner of Sierra Legal Defence Fund: "We commend chief water inspector Jim Smith for responding to the potential threat to drinking water by issuing a mandatory order for lead testing in a range of communities. Such action is important to ensure transparency and accountability to the public in respect of drinking water concerns."

I will work with those water experts across the province and continue to take their advice, and we will get to the bottom of the issue that we have found in London.

#### IPPERWASH PROVINCIAL PARK

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. Premier, as you know, the inquiry into the death of Dudley George released its report today. The report details the failures of provincial and federal governments and the Ontario Provincial Police. But the report provides a number of very helpful recommendations, and the majority of those recommendations are directed at the provincial government, the McGuinty government. Many of those recommendations can be quickly and easily implemented. My question is this: Will the McGuinty government commit to enacting these recommendations immediately so that we can finally do justice to the George family?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I thank the leader of the NDP for his question. First, I want to thank Mr. Justice Sidney Linden for his exhaustive report. There are four volumes. The executive summary alone exceeds 100 pages. It is nothing if not thorough.

What we want to do—and I appreciate the advice being offered by the leader of the NDP—is to take at least a few days to go through this in some detail. As well, in terms of setting out on a path, we choose to do that in concert with the aboriginal leadership. We want to



reflect on this report with the aboriginal community, get their best sense and, as much as we possibly can, work in concert with them as we chart a course that will take us into the future.

**Mr. Hampton:** Even Judge Linden in his report refers to the urgency of this, because he points out that over the last four years, there have been a number of circumstances where under the McGuinty government there have been conflicts and the potential for conflict.

I want to talk about one of them: the occupation by Kitchenuhmaykoosib First Nation members to protest mining development on their territorial lands. The judge who heard the court case there said:

"The Ontario government"—meaning the McGuinty government—"was not present ... the evidentiary record indicates that it has been almost entirely absent from the consultation process with" the First Nation.

"The crown (Ontario) ... [has] chosen to ignore ... the concerns and ignore the perspective of the First Nations band in question."

It is very clear, in fact, when you read the judge's decision that the McGuinty government has not been consulting with First Nations in order to find consensus and avoid conflict.

My question is this: The community now has a \$650,000 legal bill. Will you pay that bill, since it's your—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked. Premier?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the minister responsible for aboriginal affairs.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I answered this question directly to the member in the House earlier this week. I'd say to the member that, as with his first question, this government is not going to act arbitrarily without working in partnership with First Nations peoples and aboriginals in this province.

1450

I was asked this question this morning in regard to the Ipperwash inquiry, and we think there are a number of highly informative, constructive and positive recommendations there that would really go well with improving the relationship that government has with aboriginal peoples in this country. We welcome those recommendations, but we're going to do that in partnership with aboriginal peoples and work with them through this.

**Mr. Hampton:** I asked this of the Premier, because it seems to me that if we're going to take any real meaning from the Dudley George inquiry, it is that ways have to be mended. The judge said this: "Despite repeated judicial messages delivered over the course of 16 years, the evidentiary record available in this case sadly reveals that the provincial crown"—the McGuinty government—"has not heard or comprehended this message and has failed in fulfilling" its obligations. When the McGuinty government brought forward Bill 210, child protection and child welfare amendments, First Nations had to come and protest here, in front of Queen's Park, because you

refused to consult with them. When the government brought forward Bill 36, local health integration, one First Nation organization threatened to take the government to court because you refused to consult with them.

My question again to the Premier is this: This First Nation will have to cut its health budgets, education budgets and housing budgets. Why? Because they were forced to go to court because of your government's failure to consult, your failure to meet your constitutional obligations. You should cover their legal—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. The minister responsible for aboriginal affairs.

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** The leader of the third party couldn't have it so wrong. It was a year ago that I was up in that very community he talks about, KI, at Big Trout Lake in northern Ontario, and offered to the Chiefs of Ontario, at their annual meeting, the Ontario government document of our obligation to consult and accommodate. I said that we wanted to engage in that discussion with them over the next year and that we were prepared to give them the capacity for those discussions.

But you have to remember, and I know the member knows this well, there are 134 First Nation communities in this province, and they don't have a consensus view as to how they want to engage this government on the consultation discussion. We have been prepared since last June to do that and we've also equipped the First Nations with the capacity to do that. We're awaiting word from them of how we're going to work together to make that discussion go. In the meantime, all my colleagues are consulting on a daily basis with First Nations right across this province.

#### NORTHERN ECONOMY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** To the Premier: Yes, the McGuinty government is consulting after the fact, after the judge condemned you for your failure to observe your constitutional obligations.

My question of the Premier is this: The riding of Thunder Bay-Superior North has been hard hit by the closure of paper mills, pulp mills, sawmills and now a plywood mill. In this constituency, Great West Timber sawmill is closed—100 jobs; Cascades Fine Papers, closed—550 jobs; Smurfit-Stone container board mill, closed—110 jobs; Red Rock's Norampac container mill, closed—400 jobs; Dorion Sturgeon Timber, closed—100 jobs; and now the news that the Multiply mill in Nipigon will not reopen—another 150 jobs.

Premier, this is a result of your government's failed forest policies and hydroelectricity policies. Can you tell the people, the honest, hardworking people, of Thunder Bay and north of Superior what they are supposed to do when most of their employment has now been shut down or lost under the McGuinty government?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I always appreciate the questions.

I had the opportunity last week to visit Thunder Bay. The leader of the NDP insists that he is determined to



make changes that would improve job opportunities and strengthen the economy of the great northwest part of our province. When I was in Thunder Bay, I had a tour of the Bombardier plant. The work they are doing to produce train cars is absolutely cutting-edge.

One of the things they are very concerned about is the continuing insistence on the part of the NDP that we not extend the subway line to York. That would result in the loss of hundreds of jobs at that factory. If the leader of the NDP is truly committed to economic prosperity and maintaining and, indeed, creating new jobs in northwestern Ontario, why will he not support the investment in that new infrastructure that's good for transit, that's good for the environment and good for northwestern Ontario?

**Mr. Hampton:** The only thing that's happened at the Bombardier plant is that the McGuinty government did away with the requirement that they be the sole source for transit vehicles for cities in Ontario.

I again want to ask the Premier: the paper mills, pulp mills, sawmills and plywood mills that are the heart and soul of these communities—every time you lose a job in one of these mills, you lose four derivative jobs in the community. It is now approaching 11,000 direct and indirect jobs in the Thunder Bay region.

Premier, you can go to Thunder Bay, you can do a tour and you can do a photo op, but when is the McGuinty government actually going to do something to sustain, retrain and retain the thousands of forest sector jobs that are being lost, especially in the Thunder Bay region?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** Thank you very much for the opportunity to answer the question. Let me first of all talk about the Nipigon situation, because it is a very, very serious situation and we're very concerned. That's why the Minister of Natural Resources last evening, as I did this morning, contacted the mayor and said that we're here for them. We put a substantial financial package together, and that financial package is still on the table. Sadly, they were proceeding, but a fire destroyed the mill. The owners decided not to rebuild. We will work with the town in every way we can to ensure longevity and viability for Nipigon.

But I do want to compare, hopefully in the next answer, the records of what the McGuinty government has done in comparison to what they did when they were in power.

**Mr. Hampton:** The McGuinty government refers to the fact that the mill burned down. That is not the issue now. The issue is that the owners take a look at McGuinty hydro policies and forest policies and say, "We're not going to make the investment to rebuild the mill," just as Abitibi is saying that they're not going to reopen their mill in Thunder Bay; just as Norampac is saying that under McGuinty government policies, they're not going to open the Norampac mill; Smurfit-Stone isn't

going to reopen their mill; and Cascades isn't going to reopen their mill.

Minister, you talk about aid. You put out these announcements talking about your \$500-million forest prosperity fund. In fact, we know that 87% of that \$500 million is still sitting in a government bank account, because they look at your forest policies, they look at your electricity policy and they say, "No thanks, we're not interested."

My question: When is the McGuinty government finally going to take meaningful action to help to restore some of the economic—

**The Speaker:** The question's been asked. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Bartolucci:** The McGuinty government has taken very effective action in the past and will continue to take very effective action in the future, because we want to avoid an average of 1,000 people a week joining the ranks of the unemployed. We want to avoid what happened under the NDP, when natural resource jobs in northwestern Ontario decreased from 11,700 to 6,000. That's why, unlike Ms. Martel, when she was the Minister of Northern Development and Mines and slashed the ministry budget by \$141.5 million, we've continually increased the Ministry of Northern Development's budget: 2003-04, \$408 million; 2004-05, \$565 million; 2005-06, \$632 million; 2006-07, \$680 million—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question?

1500

## NURSE PRACTITIONERS

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** My question is for the Minister of Health. Nurse practitioners who work in community health centres in this province are telling us they're demoralized, they are discouraged and they are frustrated. In fact, the headline in the Guelph paper says, "Nurse Practitioners Want Raise: Many have not had salaries increased for four years; Ontario falling behind, association says." In the Kitchener-Waterloo Record, "Recruiting Troubles: Search for More Nurse Practitioners Complicated by Lagging Salaries." I would say to you, Minister, that these individuals also state in here, "'Ontario was a leader when it came to nurse practitioners,' said Jane Sanders." Of course, we introduced them in 1998, "'But now we've fallen behind (other provinces). And we're getting angry about the salary inequities.'"

I say to you, Minister, you have the Hay report on your desk. You have another report that deals with the role of nurse practitioners and their scope of practice. Are you prepared to respond today to the recommendations—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked. Minister?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I want to say firstly to the honourable member that there are two things that are a little bit challenging with respect to you standing up and asking a question. The first is your party's commitment to take \$2.5 billion out of health



care. The second is the fact that you talk about these operating in the context of community health centres, when for eight and a half years you froze their budgets.

Contrast that to our record. Since we came to office, we have increased funding for community health centres by 60% and we've advanced the number of nurse practitioners by 21%.

I want to let the honourable member know, because I know the issue at hand is an important one, that I'll be making further announcements on that subject at my upcoming visit to the annual meeting of the Ontario Association of Community Health Centres.

**Mrs. Witmer:** Mr. Speaker, through you, the minister knows full well that he is misleading—

**The Speaker:** You'll need to withdraw that comment.

**Mrs. Witmer:** Oh, I'll withdraw if he'll withdraw. John Tory is not—

**The Speaker:** No, no. It's not conditional. You either withdraw or you don't.

**Mrs. Witmer:** I'll mislead—I'll withdraw.

*Interjections.*

**Mrs. Witmer:** I would say, Mr. Speaker, I stand here—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. The member deserves to be heard.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** Order, Minister of Municipal Affairs. Member for Kitchener–Waterloo.

**Mrs. Witmer:** I stand here today because I have been asked to raise this issue in the House by the community health centres and nurse practitioners who, as I would emphasize, indicated that things were very good initially. However, it now appears that the government is not treating them fairly.

As you know, other members of the community health teams did get an increase, a salary adjustment. I say to you today, Minister, are you prepared to deal with their frustration and their discouragement—those are their words—and give them a salary increase?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** On that subject, I have already indicated that I will be very pleased to address it at the Ontario Association of Community Health Centres. But on the point at hand with respect to who believes John Tory's promise not to cut health care by \$2.5 billion, he didn't fool the Cornwall newspaper. He didn't fool the Globe and Mail. He didn't fool the Toronto Star. He's not fooling us, and he sure as heck didn't fool the president of the Ontario Nurses' Association, who wrote a scorching letter this week reminding everyone who might have forgotten about it just what a terrible government you were for nurses and for health care.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto–Danforth):** My question is for the Premier. Provincial mandatory testing of tap water, something that's been in place in the US for over a decade, would give families in this province assurance that they are protected from lead. Today, the

Speaker assured people in this House that the water is safe in this Legislature. Other Ontarians deserve that sort of testing and that sort of assurance, and when the assurance isn't there, they need action.

Premier, will you tell your Minister of the Environment to bring in mandatory testing of our water for lead, from source to tap?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** As I have said in this House before, my primary responsibility is to protect the health and safety of all Ontarians. Since learning about the unfortunate situation in London, we have worked closely with experts in the field to take immediate action. Our chief drinking water inspector has engaged with the community of London. We have retained world-renowned experts to work with them to understand the corrosive nature of their water, to understand the water chemistry, to understand why long-standing test results with good, clean water have now changed and why the circumstances that we've always believed in this country—that flushing your pipes for five minutes would ensure that you do not have lead in your water—are now different. It is something we need to get to the bottom of and something we will continue to work on to assure that the community is safe.

**Mr. Tabuns:** The problems in London are an example of how this government has ignored what came out of Walkerton. Justice O'Connor said in 2002 that we have to take action on lead service pipes. We know that people on fixed incomes, people of modest means, people who are worried about their children are not getting the full story, as they are in the United States. I don't see why we can't at least follow the example of the Environmental Protection Agency which, since 1991, has been mandating testing at the tap. We, in Ontario—our children, our families—deserve at least the same level of protection that is given in the United States. So I come back again: When will you mandate testing of water from source to tap, so that people can have confidence in their tap water?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** I am very proud to be part of a government that has done more than any government in Ontario history to assure that we have clean, safe water from source to tap. I can tell you that we are not waiting. The chief drinking water inspector has required, by order, 36 communities to test their water at the tap, and to provide that information to us by June 6, so that we can move quickly and promptly with accurate information to assure that Ontarians can be confident of the safety of their drinking water. That is our pre-eminent concern. We will continue to make sure that clean, safe drinking water is an absolute reality in the province of Ontario, in every single home, in every single community.

#### STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** My question is to the Minister of Education. Over the last



three and a half years, we've built a strong publicly funded education system that's supporting student success and raising student achievement. From lowering class sizes in the primary grades straight through to helping our students graduate, we're making student achievement a priority.

#### *Interjections*

**Mr. Duguid:** My colleagues to the right may laugh, but my goodness, when they were in power they did nothing for education compared to what we've done. Yesterday saw the Canadian Council on Learning release its 2007 composite learning index. The data covers everything from dropout rates to the distances students travel to school. The composite learning index is an objective, statistical measure of how well our schools are doing.

My question to the minister is: Can the minister inform the House how this report validates the fact that our investments under the Liberal funding formula have resulted in real, measurable results for our students?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** I want to thank the member for his question and to confirm what he said: This report demonstrates that after eight years of really struggling under the previous government, we are on the right track. The education system in this province is recovering from those years. The results are clear. The composite learning index, which is the tool that is used by the Canadian Council on Learning, demonstrates that Ontario scores an 80 and the national average is 76. In fact, we're the third-highest in the country overall. We don't have to take my word for it. Annie Kidder, the executive director of People for Education, says, "This information shows that Ontario has much to be proud of. It's important that we remember that overall Ontario does an excellent job educating its students.... It is vital that we frame our calls for improvement in an understanding that the system itself is essentially healthy and worthy of our support."

1510

**Mr. Duguid:** I think my constituents will be pleased to know that thousands more students are achieving their full potential today because we partnered with our stakeholders and all Ontarians to improve the publicly funded education system. We promised Ontario students in 2003 that we would rebuild our education system, and that's exactly what we've done. The result is that more students are now graduating from high school, gaining a solid foundation in reading, writing and math and getting more of the individual attention they need to succeed. While the Tories measured failure, we're measuring success.

Can the minister advise my constituents, and this House, specifically what the report acknowledged as real results for Ontario's students?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** Here are some of the things that the Canadian Council on Learning report said: Ontario has the third-lowest dropout rate in Canada, Ontario's 15-year-olds have the third-highest reading scores in the country on international PISA tests, Ontario has the

second-highest proportion of 20- to 24-year-olds enrolled in post-secondary education and Ontario has the highest proportion of 25- to 64-year-olds who have completed a university education. So we are absolutely on the right track.

I want to acknowledge my colleague the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities because we're working in tandem to make sure that our students get to high school, graduate from high school and then are ready to go on to post-secondary endeavours.

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I find it passing strange—

#### *Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. The member for Oak Ridges.

**Mr. Klees:** I find it passing strange that the government wouldn't raise the report that was published today: Ontario's tool for measurement of student success. I will.

The EQAO shows that for the first time since 2002 marks have not increased. It also shows that those students who are having the worst time are ESL students. The response that the minister gave was, "The province needs to examine why the test results haven't risen.... We need to see what's going on there."

Well, we know what's going on there. I want to remind the minister that in 2005 the Auditor General did an extensive investigation of what's happening in ESL. He made some very specific recommendations. I want to know, on behalf of ESL students whom this minister has let down, why she didn't follow up on the Auditor General's recommendations.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** If the member opposite read through the clippings to the end, he would understand that we're introducing a new policy on English as a second language in response to the Auditor General's report and also in response to the reality that we want to make sure that English-as-a-second language dollars that go into the system are spent on English as a second language. That policy is coming out.

On the grade 10 test, 25,000 more students succeeded this year than five years ago. That is huge progress. We are at a high-water mark in terms of the students in this province, with 84% of students passing the test.

The reality is that there are areas we need to focus on; there are areas we need to target. The whole point of a test is to have it as a diagnostic, so we can identify where the kids are, where the schools are that need some support. That's actually something the previous government did not understand. They thought that tests were for ranking kids and ranking schools. We know they are for diagnostic purposes to help kids.

**Mr. Klees:** I did read through to the end of the clippings, and I also read all the report. Here is what the same organization the minister quoted from in the



previous question said: "Despite repeated recommendations from the Provincial Auditor, community organizations and parent groups, the province has not changed its ESL funding practices to ensure the funding reaches the ESL students who need it." What is it that the minister hasn't read, and why is it that after the Auditor General's specific recommendations to put accountability measures in, after her own ministry admitted that they know the grants for ESL are often reallocated in school boards to other programs, she sat on this report since 2005 and did nothing? She owes an apology to the ESL students she and her government have let down. What we would like is a commitment to implement the Auditor General's recommendations.

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** As I said before, the policy on English-as-a-second-language funding accountability is drafted. It's going to be released very shortly and will be in place for September.

On the issue of the tests and the achievement of our students, 1,000 more ESL learners have been successful this year than in 2002, and 4,500 more special-needs students have been successful than in 2002. We've got 95% of students in the academic English stream who are successful. Almost 14,000 more students have passed than in 2002, and 11,000 more students in the applied English stream have been successful than in 2002.

We know there's more to be done. We are an activist government and we are on the track to improving kids' education across this province. As I said, on the issue of English as a second language, the policy will be introduced very shortly.

#### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I have a question to the Minister of Health. The minister knows about Andrew Lanese. He's the 10-year-old boy down in Fonthill who suffers from Hunter's syndrome, for which there was no cure, no treatment, until the US Food and Drug Administration approved a therapeutic drug called Elaprase in 2006. Health Canada has authorized Andrew to be treated with Elaprase here in Canada. The problem is that OHIP won't fund it. Minister, would you please review and reconsider that decision not to fund Elaprase for young Andrew Lanese?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** The honourable member will know from his involvement on this that the ministry has been working both with the family and the manufacturer. I can't say all that I'd like to say publicly about the situation, of course, given the fact that it relates to one particular individual, but I will tell the honourable member that, as in past circumstances, we are working vigorously to try and find the appropriate conditions for providing the treatment. As always, a really important part of that will be the clinical advice that is on offer. It isn't always possible to achieve a clinical consensus on these matters, but we are very happy to

re-examine the matter as the honourable member has questioned.

**Mr. Kormos:** The family is counting upon you to give Andrew that last fighting chance. It knows that not all doctors in this province currently approve of Elaprase as a treatment, but there are doctors who do. Will you please ensure that the folks of this young boy, Nick and Sonia Lanese, have an opportunity to meet with senior staff in your ministry so they can fully make their case?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** As members may know, since the alterations that the Legislature approved to the Ontario drug system, we now have a chief executive officer of that system. I believe that staff from that area have been in touch with the manufacturer and the family, as I said in my earlier response, but, yes, I most certainly indicate to the honourable member and to these individuals that we'll continue to work through this matter and re-examine it as we seek to find the appropriate clinical advice that would be of benefit to the individual in question. So I thank the honourable member for his interest.

#### DIABETES

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. There has been a lot of discussion in health circles and the media these days about chronic diseases, and the latest Ontario Health Quality Council report raised chronic disease management as a serious issue that needs to be addressed.

The Peterborough Regional Health Centre is the regional dialysis centre for the Central East LHIN. This hospital offers dialysis treatment to chronic disease sufferers in my riding and the surrounding community. The demand for dialysis services is growing and the Peterborough Regional Health Centre program is at capacity. A request has been submitted to you to expand dialysis services at Ross Memorial Hospital to help alleviate the burden on the Peterborough Regional Health Centre. My question to the minister is this: Are you going to approve this very important request?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Ross Memorial has been providing, on a temporary basis, dialysis for a number of individuals, but there is a pressing need in this local health integration network area to enhance the capacity for dialysis services. Obviously, it's one of those things that, if it's not provided quite close to home, it provides a tremendous strain and very dramatic challenges for individuals and for their families.

1520

Accordingly, I'm very pleased to inform the honourable member that we're going to build off the program at Peterborough Regional centre with a 15-bed permanent program at Ross Memorial. We'll undertake this knowing that the hospital and the community that supports it has very strong capacity to do so. Accordingly, we want to thank all of those providers who are working to provide the best possible care to Ontarians as close to home as possible.



**Mr. Leal:** That is indeed excellent news for our region. There is no doubt that the residents of Lindsay will benefit from satellite dialysis that will take some of the pressure off Peterborough Regional, but where is the larger plan? I know there are some interim measures in place in the southeast LHIN that include more capacity in Northumberland Hills Hospital and six temporary dialysis stations in Ross Memorial Hospital. You've just now committed to moving forward with 15 permanent stations at Ross Memorial, but the issue is bigger than the southeast LHIN. Will the minister tell us what his provincial plan is to deal with chronic disease management?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Firstly, through the leadership of the Premier, the Ministry of Health Promotion was created, which has a mandate to help prevent chronic disease in the first place—people have seen programs related to that. We have tremendous strides to make to enhance the capability of having a good chronic disease management system, but for individuals with diabetes, as an example, you can see tremendous emergence of more comprehensive services. Investment in kidney dialysis means that 9,000 more Ontarians are able to receive those treatments; we have 146 new diabetes treatment teams that work at the community level; we've brought new diabetes drugs onto our formulary; and we've introduced insulin pumps for kids. These are all initiatives which create a more comprehensive range of services closer to people's homes for people with diabetes in the province of Ontario, as precursors to province-wide chronic disease management strategies related to things like diabetes.

## HIGHWAY 26

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey):** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. I told your government when you took the bulldozers off the redevelopment of Highway 26 in the summer of 2004 that if there was a death on this highway, it's on your heads. Last week, a very popular former teacher was killed and his wife seriously injured on this very stretch of Highway 26. Why, over the last three and a half years, have you failed to take my advice, the advice of Collingwood, Wasaga Beach and Clearview councils and the advice of our communities to complete this highway to improve road safety?

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Transportation):** I'm pleased to respond to the question and first and foremost offer my sympathies to the family.

We know that this is a huge challenge within this area. As a matter of fact, I have met with the member on this particular highway. I've travelled the highway myself. We've actually put that highway into our budget this year because we recognize the significant challenges that are being faced in that area. The challenge I have right now is I put it in because I know how important it is, but that party voted against our budget.

**Mr. Wilson:** You mentioned the highway in the budget speech, but you don't have it in any tables

showing the \$34 million or whatever money you want to put into it. We would have been driving on this highway now if you hadn't taken the bulldozers off in 2004.

Let me quote from last week's Collingwood Enterprise-Bulletin. "Lots of lip service has been paid to the subject by the McGuinty Liberal government but it's now time for them to stop kissing up to us with empty promises and put the shovels in the ground. Public safety demands nothing less.

"Their track record on the subject has been abysmal. The Liberal government has stalled, delayed, obfuscated and backtracked to the point of absurdity. Enough is enough....

"Under the grim circumstances, Cansfield had better show up with bags of cash and an ironclad promise to begin the work now. Otherwise she may not be welcome."

Minister, why don't you stop the carnage and finish this highway this summer?

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** Again, I'm more than pleased to respond. In fact, the engineering is under way. We all know in this House that in order to do the completion of any highway, we have to undergo the engineering, the EA, we have to do the work. That work is well under way. I did go up; I sat down with all of the communities—with Intrust-Blue Mountain and with the city of Collingwood itself—to say, "How do we work together to find a solution to an extraordinarily challenging issue up there?" and that is that highway.

I'm sorry but I have taken the initiative, I have been up there. I've talked to the people, they've been down to speak to me, the engineering's under way and we hope to have it completed by 2008. We know that it will be done because we walk our talk on this side of the House.

## EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, the Thames Valley District School Board announced plans to make the deepest cuts since 1996: 65 positions are on the chopping block. Half are cuts to aides who help kids at risk. Even your child literacy program, about which you boast so much, is facing the guillotine. I, quite frankly, am tired of the minister telling us how well she is funding our schools and that the school boards are mismanaging her largesse. The net result: 65 positions are on the chopping block in London alone. Is the minister going to take responsibility for these problems or is she going to ask parents in London to do her job and ask families to donate \$250 each to save their children's programs?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** I have absolutely no intention of denigrating the school boards. I never do that; I never will do that. That was what the previous government did: vilify everyone in the education sector. That's not what I do.

What we're doing is putting money into a system that is actually losing students because the enrolment growth is declining. What we have done in the face of that



decline is put \$3.5 billion into the system. In Thames Valley, there have actually been 325 new teachers since we came into office. Seventy-seven per cent of the JK to grade 3 classes are capped, which is up from 33% under the Conservatives, so those are classes that are at 20 students or fewer. Ninety-seven per cent of those classes are at 23 students or fewer.

There are more teachers and there's more money in the system. I know the boards are balancing their budgets now, and I know that in the face of declining enrolment they have challenges—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary. The member for Parkdale–High Park.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale–High Park):** Today I'm joined by members of my community who were part of a very large and very angry meeting last night. They are outraged that Keele Street community pool is going to be closed, one of six slated to close in the city. When she was a trustee in 2002, the Minister of Education demanded that the province fund community and school pools and keep them open. Now that you're education minister, we need action. The city doesn't have the money; we all know that. Will you commit to these people today to keep our community pools open?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** From the top, let me say that there is nothing this member can tell me about swimming pools in the city of Toronto. I have been consistent in my position that these pools are a community asset. They are an asset that is shared by the municipality and by the school board. That was my position when I was on the school board and it's my position now.

Neither the Thames Valley board nor the Toronto District School Board has passed its budget. They are in the process of finalizing their budgets. The fearmongering that is going on on the other side of the House, both by this member and the member for Trinity–Spadina, is actually inexcusable, because the school boards have to finalize their budgets, and that's not done yet.

The capital plans that the Toronto District School Board put in place will have an impact on whether they can fund the school pools or not. The relationship they have with the city will have an impact on whether they can keep those school pools open. Those pools are community assets and should be treated as such.

#### ARTS AND CULTURAL FUNDING

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** My question is for the Minister of Culture, and I'm sure the Minister of Culture would be interested in this question because I'm very proud, here in Ontario, that we celebrate our very valuable heritage and our rich history by designating May as Museum Month.

I was pleased to have hosted the minister in my riding on International Museum Day on May 18 to announce over \$14,000 to the Brant Museums and Galleries Association from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, not to mention a previous grant that did a feasibility study for the creation of Museum Alley.

Minister, we all enjoyed a great celebration in Brantford when you were there, but would you please share with the members of this House how the rest of the province celebrated May as Museum Month and give us some detail upon which all of our communities, we know, celebrate museums and the heritage they have in each and every one of the communities in Ontario?

1530

**Hon. Caroline Di Cocco (Minister of Culture):** I'm certainly happy to respond to the member for Brant. I had a really enjoyable time in Brantford, and I have to say that the member from Brant is well respected for the work that he does in his heritage community.

Museums are treasures. They tell our stories; they showcase our stories in every city, town and village in Ontario. It was wonderful to raise awareness of the importance of museums in the month of May. It was a time of celebration, with over 600 museums, historic sites and art galleries in every part of this province, and individuals were treated to hands-on activities, to exhibits, to lectures, to concerts and, in some cases, free admission to these sites.

Local history adds depth and resonance to everything around us, so this month has been a pleasure.

**Mr. Levac:** I thank the enthusiastic way in which the communities have embraced—across the province, including my riding—May as Museum Month. But I also want to thank the minister for enthusiastically taking this portfolio and bringing it to new heights. I thank you for your passion.

We also have to say a great deal about the value of museums that are in our lives, the wonderful staff that the centres are run by, and the countless number of volunteers who dedicate their lives to celebrating the regions in our history. I believe it's very important to make investments of this kind that you've made in my riding and that I know you have made in several other ridings.

Minister, unfortunately, some people claim that there has been a decrease. I'd like to know, what is our government doing to ensure that Ontario's museums remain strong and preserve our heritage and our history for generations to come, and could you please explain to us the monies that are going to be available to our museums to ensure their livelihood?

**Hon. Ms. Di Cocco:** Ontario has come a long way from the days when arts, culture and heritage were considered frills and unnecessary by the previous government.

In our recent budget, we increased the community museum operating grant by 85%, a move that will strengthen over 180 museums in this province. The Ontario Trillium Foundation, which supports museums through grants, will have its operating funding increased by 20% to \$120 million over three years.

I was perplexed to hear a member of the opposition state recently that funding to the Trillium Foundation was cut under our watch. This is absolutely incorrect. We've increased funding by \$20 million, and this increased funding will also benefit museums.

We're very pleased to provide overall an increased support both to museums and to the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Minister of Energy, and it relates to a letter that was addressed to the minister on May 16 of this year from the coalition of York region chambers, including Aurora, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Markham and others. They speak specifically about two recommendations made by the Ontario Power Authority in September 2005. The first is to construct a transformer station in the vicinity of Holland Junction. The second is the construction of a gas-fired peaker plant for local generation.

Nothing has happened on these issues. The chambers are very concerned about the possibility of brownouts, even blackouts, if nothing is done.

My question to the minister is this: Will the minister ensure that, first of all, the construction for the transformer station will begin, and that there is no further delay in issuing an RFP at least for the peaking station?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy):** When we came to office, the situation in York region had been let go for eight years, and it really was in a crisis situation. With rapid growth, there wasn't adequate generation, adequate wiring. We did direct the OPA to begin work on that.

I can inform the member of a number of steps we've taken. Work is now under way on short-term recommendations to ensure that we keep the lights on in the next few years. Hydro One has commenced its development work, including consulting with the public on the transformer station in King township. The Ontario Energy Board is monitoring the key milestones on this project. The OPA has selected Rodan Energy and Metering Solutions as the successful proponent in York region demand response. Demand response is something your government cut, sir. That is where we would turn power down. So we've taken some intermediate steps. I'd also assure the member that we've met with—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Klees:** I'm well familiar with the consultations; I participated in them. I also know—perhaps the minister doesn't—that specific recommendations have already been made and that what we are awaiting is the issuance of an RFP for local generation.

It has come to my attention that the minister, when asked why the RFP is not being issued—the OPA is awaiting direction from the minister to have that done. I'm also advised that the minister has made the statement that he will not do so before the provincial election. I would ask that the minister put the interests of our communities ahead of whatever political or partisan reasons he may have for delaying the issuance of this RFP, that he get on with it so that we can be assured of stability of power supply in York region.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** Our government has taken a number of steps to ensure that the power needs of the region are in fact met this summer and next summer. What's interesting is that various members of your caucus from the region have differing points of view on where the generation should go. Which township do you want it to be in? The member talks about what one says, but when one municipality says, "We don't want power generation," the other one says, "We don't want power generation." Other municipalities have said they don't want wires. If the member has a better process, I invite him to bring it forward.

The fact is, after eight years of neglect, the people of York region can be assured that the power will stay on this summer and next summer. There are long-term solutions that need to be addressed. I look forward to the member's support for siting a new power generation plant in his riding, and I look forward to his support in terms of bringing the wires through his riding that are going to be needed as well. I'm delighted—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

### PETITIONS

#### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):** I have a petition to present to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, which reads as follows:

"Whereas Ontarians are sick of paying high prices at the province's gas pumps and deserve additional protection from sudden increases in price; and

"Whereas it is important for consumers to be aware of upcoming increases and the reasons behind the price increases; and

"Whereas Joe Tascona, MPP for Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford, introduced private member's Bill 228, entitled the Gas Prices Notice Act, 2007, which passed first reading of the Legislature on May 17, 2007; and

"Whereas Bill 228 would provide consumers with 72 hours' advance notice of any gas price increases and an explanation for the price increases; and

"Whereas retailers would face stiff fines if they do not comply with the 72-hour notification period;

"We, the undersigned, petition the provincial government to give consideration to provincial Bill 228 to require 72 hours' advance notice of any gas price increase, and an explanation for the price increase."

I support the petition and affix my signature.

#### ANTI-IDLING BYLAWS

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot):** I continue to get petitions from young people in my riding, from a group known as SAVE, Students Against Violating the Environment, and another petition has come in today. It reads:

"To the Parliament of Ontario:



"Whereas the fact that idling of cars is a major contributor to climate change, poor air quality and a waste of valuable resources—action should be taken by the Parliament of Ontario against it;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Be it resolved that the provincial government, through the Ministry of the Environment, immediately initiate discussion with its municipal partners, ideally through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, so as to move beyond the patchwork quilt of existing and important municipal anti-idling bylaws to a provincially generic piece of legislation with enforcement mechanisms that can be universally applied across the entire province."

I am pleased to affix my signature to this.

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#### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I have petitions here, signed by the Most Reverend John Pazak, Bishop of the Slovak Greek Catholic Eparchy of Saints Cyril and Methodius, his clergy and parishioners throughout York region, some 500 from the parishes of St. Maria Goretti in Scarborough and Sacred Heart in Rockwood, and 600 parishioners of St. Benedict's parish in Etobicoke. The petitions read as follows:

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I'm pleased to affix my signature to these petitions as the proud proponent of this private member's bill.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the McGuinty government's transformation agenda targets health improvement, illness prevention and improved quality of life for all Ontarians, and current literature and research indicates that sound nutrition directly impacts healthy outcomes;

"Whereas current literature and research indicates that the acuity and nutritional needs of residents of long-term-care homes is rising and there is an increasing frail

resident population in long-term-care homes, with 25% to 60% at moderate to high nutritional risk, and that healthier long-term-care residents would decrease unnecessary hospitalizations, clogging of emergency wards and the use of acute beds in hospital environments;

"Whereas the raw food cost funding, which was \$4.26 ... in 1993 and is now \$5.46 per day per resident, has not kept pace with inflation and has presented a barrier to providing nutritionally balanced meals and providing for the increasing specialized dietary needs, and following an extensive study, an immediate increase in raw food cost funding from \$5.46 ... to \$7 per resident per day has been recommended by the Dietitians of Canada (Raw Food Cost in Ontario Long-Term Care Homes—Funding Review and Priority Recommendations dated November 2006) to provide for the nutritional needs of this population, and these recommendations are viewed as a best practice and are recognized by professional stakeholders;

"Whereas, although the McGuinty government has made significant investments in many areas of long-term care, most of these investments are not visible to family members, and there is a growing concern among family members that inadequate raw food cost funding is a barrier to planning quality menus and providing nutritionally balanced meals and beverages, and family members must speak for long-term-care residents who are unable to speak for themselves;

"Whereas the increasing multicultural nature of our aging society requires the introduction of more diverse food choices and ethnic, cultural and religious requirements which lead to the increased food costs;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to adopt the Dietitians of Canada ... report and recommendations (Raw Food Cost in Ontario Long-Term Care Homes—Funding Review and Priority Recommendations dated November 2006) and immediately increase the raw food costs in long-term care from \$5.46 per day ... to \$7 per day per resident in order to meet the nutritional needs of this population."

I agree and I will sign this petition.

#### HIGHWAY 26

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 was approved by MPP Jim Wilson and the previous PC government in 2000; and

"Whereas a number of horrific fatalities and accidents have occurred on the old stretch of Highway 26; and

"Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 is critical to economic development and job creation in Simcoe-Grey;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government stop the delay of the Highway 26 redevelopment and act immediately to ensure that the project is finished on schedule, to improve

safety for area residents and provide economic development opportunities and job creation in Simcoe–Grey.”

I agree with that petition and I have signed it.

#### COURT SUPPORT STAFF

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I’m pleased to present a petition provided to me by Lynn Thompson on behalf of court support staff in Hamilton which reads as follows:

“Whereas 1,400 members of the Attorney General’s court support staff who are working under the flexible, part-time (FPT) model, otherwise referred to as appendix 32 under a collective agreement between Management Board of Cabinet, the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union negotiated in the spring of 2005, are working hundreds of hours per week in the service of the Attorney General for which they are not getting paid; and

“Whereas under the FPT agreement many court support staff are working as many as 20 hours or more per week for which payment is being withheld and will not be paid until months later, and when the makeup pay does eventually get paid, up to 50% may be lost to taxes because of the taxation year into which the payment may fall; and

“Whereas many of the Attorney General’s court support staff who are being forced to work under these conditions are single mothers with fixed living expenses who incur employment-related expenses such as child care and travel costs for those hours that they are required to work but for which they are not getting paid; and in many cases these expenses are impossible to pay without the offsetting income which is being withheld by the Attorney General under the FPT agreement; and

“Whereas many of the Attorney General’s court support staff have been left no other choice but to resign from these impossible working conditions and, in many cases, are being forced onto the welfare rolls by the very government for which they are providing hundreds of hours of work for which they are not being paid in a timely manner; and

“Whereas the FPT agreement which is causing such hardship for employees of the Attorney General was negotiated by and entered into between the Ministry of the Attorney General, Management Board of Cabinet and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union; and the employees to whom this agreement applies insist that the terms of the agreement and their practical implications were not fully disclosed to them at the time the agreement was proposed for ratification; and

“Whereas the employees affected by this agreement have repeatedly appealed to OPSEU, the Attorney General and the Premier to point out the unfairness of being forced to work hundreds of hours without being paid for that work and the hardship this practice is causing in the lives of many employees, but these repeated appeals to the Attorney General and to the Premier that they step in to ensure fair treatment of Attorney General employees are being ignored;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to call upon the Premier, the Attorney General and the Chair of Management Board of Cabinet to take whatever steps are necessary to change the offensive provisions of the FPT agreement as set out in appendix 32 and ensure that the Attorney General’s court support staff receive fair treatment as employees of the government and that among other unfair provisions of the agreement, the practice of withholding pay for hours worked cease immediately.”

I send this to the table by way of page Elizabeth.

#### PARENTING EDUCATION

**Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale):** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas effective parenting practices do not come instinctively and parenting is our most crucial social role, parenting and human development courses need to be taught to all secondary school students. Parenting education will: reduce teen pregnancies; reduce the rate of costly fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and increase the number of healthy pregnancies; reduce the number of costly social problems related to ineffective parenting practices; and improve the ‘social fabric’ of Ontario to create a more civil society. Parenting education for students is considered to be socially valuable by a majority of adults of voting age and should be included as a mandatory credit course within the Ontario curriculum;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the requirements for the Ontario secondary school diploma to include one senior level ... course ... as a compulsory credit” course.

I agree with the petition and I put my signature on it.

#### DOCTOR SHORTAGE

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I have a petition to do with doctor shortages signed by a lot of people from the Gravenhurst area which reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas we, the undersigned, are very concerned about the doctor shortage in Muskoka;

“Whereas, without increased funding for the Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare Centre, the administration will not be able to keep it as a full-service hospital;

“Whereas, without a full-service hospital in our area, we will be unable to attract doctors; and

“Whereas Muskoka has a higher-than-average percentage of ‘senior’ citizens; it is of great concern that we attract more doctors.”

I support this petition.

#### MINIMUM WAGE

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I have a short petition here which reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:



"Whereas the general minimum wage is \$8 per hour, but students under 18 years old are receiving \$7.50 an hour, that is 50 cents less for the same work;

"Whereas this represents an outright age discrimination against younger students;

"Whereas the same work performed by younger students seems of lesser value, therefore making younger students feel less appreciated;

"Whereas this wage discrimination is basically unfair to students under 18 years of age;

"Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, Canada, strongly recommend that this wage gap be eliminated and that equal work for equal value be recognized."

This was presented to me by Corinne Shelton in the riding of Davenport.

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#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I have a petition signed by hundreds of my constituents. It's to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas concerned residents and community members in southwestern Ontario are aware the federal funds that are being allocated towards meals in our prisons are substantially more than the provincial funds that are being allocated towards the cost of meals in our long-term care facilities in the province of Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Recommend that more funds be allocated towards the cost of meals for our citizens living in long-term care facilities in the province of Ontario."

I affix my signature. I believe they deserve nothing less.

#### CHOLESTEROL THERAPY

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce):** Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize that Richard Elliott is in the audience today. He has collected 4,635 signatures on this petition, and this is on behalf of his son, Bill.

"To the Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas patients in Alberta and Quebec receive a standard therapy to control very high levels of cholesterol that cannot be treated with medication alone, patients in Ontario receive an inferior therapy unlike LDL therapy that only removes bad cholesterol. Plasma exchange removes both bad and good cholesterol. Consequently, this inferior therapy results in increased risk of cardiovascular disease and premature death of children and young adults. The option of Ontario patients going to Quebec to receive this treatment is not realistic, cost efficient or appropriate;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To urgently fund an LDL apheresis program in Ontario, with sites in Ottawa, Toronto and London. Such

a program should be a new program with separate funding, as the current budgetary restrictions would not permit the development of such a program in Ontario."

Please excuse me, I won't say this right.

"Familial homozygous hypercholesterolemia is a rare genetic disorder that occurs in approximately one in one million persons worldwide, and we are talking about a very small number of individuals, but the benefit would be significant to them, their families and communities. The cost of this treatment is approximately \$300 to \$500 more than plasma exchange per treatment once to twice per month. This is a relatively inexpensive treatment to the Ontario Ministry of Health, considering that only nine patients have been identified in Ontario in 2006."

I affix my signature to this petition in support.

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: It's that time again. I'm rising pursuant—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** We're doing the next week's business, please.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** I'm rising pursuant to standing order 55 to give the Legislature the business of the House for next week.

On the afternoon of Monday, June 4, 2007, third reading of Bill 212, the Education Amendment Act.

I'll be brief, because the rest of the week is to be confirmed. So there we go. I know they wanted more.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### HEALTH SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS ACT, 2007

##### LOI DE 2007 SUR L'AMÉLIORATION DU SYSTÈME DE SANTÉ

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 28, 2007, on the motion for third reading of Bill 171, An Act to improve health systems by amending or repealing various enactments and enacting certain Acts / *Projet de loi 171, Loi visant à améliorer les systèmes de santé en modifiant ou en abrogeant divers textes de loi et en édictant certaines lois.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** Further debate? The Chair recognizes the distinguished member from Nickel Belt.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. The cheque's in the mail.

Let me say that I only had a wee bit of a chance to start my leadoff debate the last time we dealt with this bill, which was earlier this week. I said to people then, and I'll repeat it at the start today, that I do intend to try and do the full 50 minutes that are remaining to me and



go through those concerns that we continue to have with respect to Bill 171.

I want to go back very briefly to the comments that I ended with when last we were dealing with the bill, and that had to do with schedule B of the bill: the amendments concerning the health professions. I raised my concern at that time—and I should raise it again—that we had during the course of Bill 171 a very important opportunity to make changes to a number of health care professions. In fact, we did make changes to a number of health care professions through schedule B.

I regret that the government was not willing to accept the amendments I put forward around the Nursing Act, 1991, amendments that have been put to the government for almost a year now by the College of Nurses of Ontario, amendments which would truly allow nurse practitioners, in particular, to practise to their full scope of practice, be that in a community setting or be that in an acute care setting. Very clearly, what the College of Nurses of Ontario wanted was a pattern of open prescribing for registered nurses in the extended class, nurse practitioners—a scenario that is available already in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia, as well as in 25 states in the US as of 2000.

The College of Nurses of Ontario also had asked for some more controlled acts to be extended to nurse practitioners: setting or casting a fracture of a bone or a dislocation of a joint; applying a form of energy prescribed by the regulations under the act, that is, the RHPA; and finally, dispensing a drug as defined in section 117, and that was the section with respect to more open prescribing.

I should point out that not only was the College of Nurses of Ontario wanting to see these changes—and they have put these changes to the government for almost a year now—but the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, when they came before the public hearings and made their presentation, made these specific points as well. I moved those amendments during the course of the public hearings. I could not get them accepted, and I regret that we have missed what I think was a tremendous opportunity to really enhance the responsibilities and the mandate of registered nurses in the province, particularly nurse practitioners, to allow them to provide timely care, high-quality care and to do that both in a community practice and in an acute care practice. I don't know when this bill is going to be open again, and I think we should have done it at the time that the bill was open.

I want to move on now to my second concern, which has to do with schedule K. Schedule K allows for the creation of the new Agency for Health Protection and Promotion. The governance structure is that the new agency is going to be a crown agency. The mandate, as it appears in the bill, is as follows: "To provide scientific and technical advice and support to those working ... to protect and improve the health of Ontarians." Further, their additional responsibilities include: "To carry out and support activities such as ... public health research, surveillance, epidemiology, planning and evaluation."

I raised concerns during the debate on second reading, and I want to raise these concerns again. These concerns relate to something that the late Chief Justice Archie Campbell had to say about the governance structure of the new agency in his final report on SARS. It is important to note that his recommendations in his final report, which were tabled in December 2006, provide for a much different structure for the new agency than the structure that is going to be set up under Bill 171.

I think it's important to put on the table again my concern that the government has gone with the structure that, it is true, was recommended to them by an implementation task force, which was asked by the government to look at the new agency, its governance, its structure, its mandate, its responsibilities etc., but the government has done that knowing full well that Justice Campbell had had a chance to review that structure in the final months that he wrote his report and was very critical of that very structure that the government has selected—very critical, indeed, in his final report. I want to look at what he had to say in his final report. This was in volume 3 of the final report of the SARS commission, on page 161. This is what the late Chief Justice Archie Campbell had to say about the structure of the agency that the government is now implementing through Bill 171. It is the following:

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"Although there is much wisdom in the proposal for an Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, the recommended structure fails to take into account the major SARS problem of divided authority and accountability.

"As the commission noted in its second interim report:

"The SARS response was also hamstrung by an unwieldy emergency leadership structure with no one clearly in charge. A de facto arrangement whereby the chief medical officer of health of the day shared authority with the commissioner of public safety and security resulted in a lack of clarity as to their respective roles which contributed to hindering the SARS response."

"An important lesson from SARS is that the last thing Ontario needs, in planning for the next outbreak and to deal with it when it happens, is another major independent player on the block.

"The first report of the agency implementation task force said:

"A body at arm's length from the government was recommended in the Walker, Campbell and Naylor reports, was a commitment in Operation Health Protection and aligns with the successful experience of the INSPQ (l'Institut national de santé publique du Québec)."

"The commission"—and this is Justice Campbell—"in fact recommended a much different arrangement in its first interim report"—so he contradicted what the agency task force had to say—"and warned against creating another 'silo,' another autonomous body, when SARS demonstrated the dangers of such uncoordinated entities:

"First, the structure of the new agency or centre, which will combine advisory and operational functions,



must reflect the appropriate balance between independence and accountability whether it is established as a crown corporation or some other form of agency insulated from direct ministerial control.

“Second, it should be an adjunct to the work of the chief medical officer of health and the local medical officers of health, not a competing body. SARS showed that there are already enough autonomous players on the block who can get in each other’s way if not properly coordinated. There is always a danger in introducing a semi-autonomous body into a system like public health that is accountable to the public through the government. The risk is that such a body can take on a life of its own and an ivory tower agenda of its own that does not necessarily serve the public interest it was designed to support.”

“Consequently, the commission”—that is, Justice Campbell’s commission—“recommended that the chief medical officer of health have a hands-on role at the agency, including a seat on the board.”

In the proposed legislation, the chief medical officer of health does not sit as a full member of the board and sits at the meetings when the board, and for how long the board, says that is appropriate. This is quite contrary to what Justice Campbell recommended, and very little changed in that regard during the course of the public hearings. The chief medical officer of health certainly does not have a seat on the board of the new agency, as Justice Campbell had recommended.

Secondly, “The agency implementation task force took a completely opposite approach, recommending against giving the chief medical officer of health a seat as a voting member of the board, and recommending a very autonomous role for the agency.

“This proposed arrangement ignores important lessons from SARS.

“The commission,” Justice Campbell’s commission, “far from recommending a completely arm’s-length organization, pointed out the need for the chief medical officer of health to be in charge with the assistance of the agency, which should, albeit with a measure of policy independence, be operationally accountable to the chief medical officer of health.”

So the governance structure that the government has adopted through Bill 171 is quite contrary to the recommendation that was made by Justice Archie Campbell in his final report on SARS. Given the tremendous amount of work that the Chief Justice did on SARS, given that the point of the exercise was to learn from our mistakes and never have a repeat of SARS, I find it very difficult to accept that the government would move forward with a governance structure for the new public health agency that is completely contrary to the one that was recommended by Chief Justice Archie Campbell. I do not understand the rationale for that. If we took his work seriously, and I hope we all did; if we believe that he had important lessons to share with us, and I think that we all did; if we are interested in implementing what he recommended, and I thought we were, I don’t understand why

the government is going with a governance structure of the new agency that is quite contrary to what he recommended, a structure, from his perspective, that will leave another autonomous player on the block and lead to difficulties in determining who is in charge when the next SARS outbreak or other major outbreak occurs.

It’s for that reason that OPSEU, both just after the legislation was introduced and then during the course of the public hearings, came and made representation about this matter. I want to read first from a letter dated December 12, 2006, from the former president, Leah Casselman, who wrote to Minister Smitherman about the new agency and said the following:

“OPSEU endorses key recommendations of both the Campbell and Walker reports that the government:

—strengthen the authority and operational independence of the chief medical officer of health ... while ensuring his/her continued accountability to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care;

—substantially increase the funding and resources available to the Ontario public health laboratories to ensure they have the medical and technical expertise and operational capacity to respond to future public health crises; and

—strengthen the links and improve coordination between the public health labs and both the ministry’s public health branch and broader public health and health care systems.

“We therefore support the call by both the Campbell commission and the Walker panel:

—to create a new Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion as an agency of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, under the operational authority of the” chief medical officer of health “and the direction of a competent board appointed by the Minister of Health; and

—to transfer the Ontario public health laboratories to the new agency.

“However, there is no evidence that the government’s proposal to establish the new agency outside the Ontario public service will help address any of the serious issues identified in the Campbell and Walker reports.

“On the contrary, such a move would undercut Justice Campbell’s call to balance the need for independence of the” chief medical officer of health “and the new agency against the need to ensure their direct accountability to the minister and the public. It would reduce direct ministerial accountability for the new agency’s operations. It would reduce the transparency of the agency’s operations while making it much more difficult to improve coordination between the public health labs, the ministry’s public health branch and the rest of the health care system. It would do nothing to ensure that the new agency is adequately funded. Finally, it would create additional uncertainty and dislocation for the almost 600 OPSEU members who work in the public health labs—and increase the risk of service disruptions and other problems during this important transition.



"In contrast, establishing the new agency within the" Ontario public service "would allow the government to ensure the necessary independence and expertise of the new agency's board and senior management while preserving direct accountability to the minister and the public for its operations. We therefore urge the government to create the new agency within the Ontario public service—and to work with OPSEU members to strengthen the province's system of public health surveillance while ensuring stability for the hundreds of skilled workers whose skills and expertise will be central to the new agency's success."

I can tell you that that concern was reiterated by OPSEU when they appeared before the public hearings. It was reiterated very clearly by representatives, particularly by the new president, Smokey Thomas.

It is for that reason that during the course of clause-by-clause of Bill 171, I moved an amendment that would have given effect to the recommendation that Justice Campbell had made to this government about the governance structure for the new public health agency. I moved as follows:

"that section 3 of schedule K to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Part of public service

"(2) The corporation shall be part of the public service of Ontario, and shall be under the authority of the chief medical officer of health, in his or her capacity as an assistant deputy minister within the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care."

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I think that that would have given life to the recommendations that were clearly made by Justice Campbell in his final report; again, a report that took a look at the governance structure that had been recommended by the implementation task force and refuted that structure—"condemned" would be too strong a word—but it certainly raised very serious and significant concerns about that structure, and it is, regrettably, the structure that the government decided to move forward with.

The government didn't even go as far as Justice Campbell had encouraged in his report, which was to ensure that the chief medical officer of health at least had a seat on the agency board. Rather, the government, during the course of clause-by-clause, provided this amendment:

"Attendance of CMOH

"(4) The chief medical officer of health, or his or her designate, is entitled to attend and to participate in any meeting of the board of directors."

I tell you, that is a far, far cry from the recommendation that Justice Campbell made in his final report about the chief medical officer of health. She or he had to have full participation on the board. Not only that, the agency should come under the control of the chief medical officer of health, especially in his or her capacity as the assistant deputy minister of health, which is the current structure in the province now, in terms of that line of responsibility.

So the government certainly didn't support my amendment to bring the public health agency under the public service. The government did not meet the recommendation that had been put forward by Justice Campbell to ensure that the chief medical officer of health had a seat on the board.

I remain very concerned that all of those very negative consequences which Justice Campbell already identified as lessons we should have learned from SARS are lessons that we have not learned, when we move forward with a structure that is contrary to the one that he recommended in his very voluminous report.

Also, this doesn't resolve the problems that OPSEU still continues to have, because the agency, as under the bill, is going to be outside the public service. So there are a number of other issues that still impact OPSEU members in particular that this government has to deal with.

OPSEU said in its letter and again during the course of the public hearings that if the government was going to keep the agency outside as an arm's-length agency of the government and not have it under the OPS, then a couple of things had to be dealt with:

"—Bill 158, which will restore successor rights to crown employees, will be passed and proclaimed as soon as possible, and before the transfer of any OPS employee to the new agency;

"—successor rights will apply to all OPSEU members affected by the transfer to the new agency;

"—no OPSEU member will be surplusled as a result of the transfer, either by the government or the new employer;

"—affected OPSEU members' entitlements and participation in the OPSEU pension plan will be grandfathered, in accordance with the outstanding amendment 12 to the OPSEU pension plan text."

I'm not sure what kind of conversations this government has started to have with OPSEU in this regard—because the structure that they have chosen to go with in the bill is very clear.

So these very serious and significant concerns remain and need to be dealt with, because after all, the people we are talking about who will go to the agency are very skilled, qualified, talented people who now work in the OPS, whose skills and talents and capabilities we need at the new agency.

As the government moves with a structure that is different than the one recommended by Justice Campbell, I certainly hope that the government is going to get on top of the immediate need to deal with OPSEU, to deal with these four outstanding items that will really determine whether or not the agency is going to function in a credible fashion or not.

I want to deal with two other issues with respect to the agency.

The first has to do with the funding of the new agency. I want to go back to David Walker and his report, the first report of the expert panel on SARS, in which he said the following about funding for a new public health



agency: Any new agency would need an operating budget of \$45 million. That is in addition to the existing base budget associated with the current laboratory operations; secondly, a capital budget that would need to be in the order of \$3.5 million in design and development costs and an additional \$35-million allocation to put it all together.

The bill and this particular schedule K speaks only to the governance structure and the creation of the agency, its mandate etc. There is nothing said in the bill and nothing during the course of the public hearings about the funding that is going to be provided to establish the agency.

I say very strongly to the government, David Naylor also did some very important work on SARS with his expert panel. He has made very specific recommendations about what is necessary in terms of operating and capital funding to ensure that the agency can be established in a concrete way that will work for the public health needs of those in Ontario.

So it is incumbent upon the government to respond positively to the recommendations that were made by Dr. Walker around funding levels. We cannot establish a new agency with a new mandate, give people a sense that so much more important work is going to be done, and then turn around and underfund it both with respect to the operating funds that will be provided or with the capital funds that will be required for the new public health unit itself. So the funding of this new agency is critical, and the government to date has been silent on that very important issue.

The other issue that needs to be dealt with now that the government has made a decision about the structure of the agency has to do with the recommendation that was made by the implementation task force with respect to the transfer of the public laboratories to the new agency. There are a number of public health laboratories that are already in existence in the province. They are under the public service, and it is recommended that they be transferred to the new agency. The implementation task force made the following point: that we need to reshape, retool and refocus the Ontario public health labs so individuals in the system have the tools, the processes and the supports necessary to cope with the challenges and excel; that we need to deepen and strengthen the emphasis on, and the opportunity for, research and academic partnerships; that the Ontario public health laboratories remain intact and are transferred intact to the new agencies; and, finally, that there be an immediate establishment of a laboratory transition team to aid in the planning.

The task force was very clear that there is much expertise, much talent within the public laboratories now with members of the OPS, that that talent needs to remain intact. It needs to be fostered, it needs to be enhanced and encouraged, and transfer needs to take place with great care and with obviously all of the negotiation that must go on with respect to successor rights etc. So I would encourage the government, once the bill is passed, to

immediately move on this recommendation that was made by the task force to establish a laboratory transition team as soon as possible to aid in the planning that must be done so that we can move toward a new public health agency that is going to benefit all Ontarians.

I hope the government will send a very clear signal to OPSEU members and OPSEU leadership as soon as possible that they very much intend to deal with the four outstanding concerns articulated in OPSEU's letter dated December 12 that revolve around successor rights, surplussing and pensions, and that they will also work to create a committee with OPSEU that will look at that very important transition and transfer of the public laboratories to the new public health agency.

I want to deal next with schedule P. In the original bill, schedule P created a new college to regulate both naturopathy and homeopathy. As a result of the public hearings, it became very clear that both groups of health care professionals really prefer to have their own colleges. So as a result of the public hearings, both I, on behalf of New Democrats, and the government moved forward with amendments that would indeed create two new colleges, one for each of those particular professions. The amendments, I think it's safe to say, were similar regarding the governance structure, bylaws, the roles and responsibilities, the committees that would be created etc. But there were three areas where our NDP amendments and the government amendments were different, and I want to outline those on the public record.

#### 1620

First of all, I want to make it clear that the amendments that we put forward were put to us by the Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors, which we worked with during the course of the public hearings. So our amendments are a reflection of what they wanted to see in this new schedule P in terms of the new college that they were going to be establishing.

The first difference had to do with the appropriate name of the college. The government amendment puts forward the "College of Naturopaths of Ontario." Of course, that was accepted. Our amendment that I put forward would have named the college the "College of Naturopathic Doctors of Ontario." The reason that we did this is that very clearly amongst those who provide naturopathic medicine there is a concern about title and how they are spoken about, what their title is and how people see them. I think the best reflection of that had to do with a letter that was sent to all of us from their association outlining their concerns with the bill before the public hearings started. I just want to read from this letter with respect to this particular concern:

"Outlining a format for title protection that will result in Ontario's naturopaths being forced to use the title 'doctor of naturopathy' that has never been used before in Ontario: This title is currently only used by poorly trained and unregulated practitioners in other jurisdictions who do not qualify to be naturopaths and would therefore reduce the confidence of the public in Ontario that they are" really "seeing a regulated health provider.



Bill 171 should continue to use the titles already established in Ontario: 'naturopathic doctor' and 'doctor of naturopathic medicine.'"

Throughout the course of the amendments with respect to the new schedule P, those are the amendments that we put forward, so that those titles that are already in use in the province would continue to be in use and that there would be no sense from the public that somehow the changing of the title—a title change that in other jurisdictions is reflective of those who are unregulated—would be carried into Ontario and give people the sense that they were not being seen by a highly qualified, regulated health professional. So I wish the government would have gone with the titles that naturopathic doctors have used for a long, long time now and one that certainly is their preference in relation to what they know happens in other jurisdictions when there are different titles.

Secondly, we had a difference of opinion with respect to the scope of practice. Our amendment read as follows with respect to schedule P: "The practice of naturopathic medicine is the assessment of an individual, and the diagnosis and treatment of diseases, disorders and dysfunctions through the integrated use of naturopathic techniques to promote, maintain or restore health." If I look at the government's scope of practice, it was a little bit different. It did not talk about naturopathic medicine. It said: "The practice of naturopathy is the assessment of diseases, disorders and dysfunctions and the naturopathic diagnosis and treatment of diseases, disorders and dysfunctions using naturopathic techniques to promote, maintain or restore health." The difference really came around "naturopathic medicine," which was the preference of the association, which was in our amendment, and the government's use of "naturopathy" as a stand-alone.

Again, it seems to me that naturopaths have been working for some long time in the province of Ontario—for many years, actually—under the Drugless Practitioners Act. They have titles that have been already established. They have practices that have already been established. I think it just would have made some common sense to put into place a scope of practice that the association that's been representing doctors of naturopath for many years felt was the more appropriate one. But that did not happen.

The other difference in terms of the amendments that were put forward by New Democrats and the government with respect to the new college had to do with the controlled acts. We did put forward an amendment that would have added an additional controlled act to naturopaths, and in particular is the following: "Prescribing, dispensing, selling or compounding prescribed substances that are consistent with the practice of naturopathic medicine." The government did not accept that amendment for that controlled act to be applied to naturopathic doctors in the province of Ontario.

The reason that we moved that amendment goes back to the letter that we received from the association before

the public hearings started. It said as follows: "Taking away the ability of naturopaths to prescribe, dispense, sell and compound many natural health products that are currently available to patients, and that naturopaths are highly trained to use safely and effectively. HPRAC recommends that naturopaths be granted this controlled act. Without this controlled act, naturopaths would only be able to use natural health products intended for over-the-counter sale to consumers to treat patients, meaning we could no longer offer the optimal care that results when naturopaths can customize a treatment plan based on the full range of natural medicines that are currently available. Naturopaths have been prescribing, dispensing, selling and compounding natural medicines as part of their current scope of care in a safe and effective manner."

I said earlier that naturopaths have been regulated under the Drugless Practitioners Act for many, many years now, I think well over 70, and this is the kind of practice that they have already undertaken on behalf of their patients. So it seemed a little silly to me that we wouldn't recognize what has become common practice among these health care professionals and enshrine that in the act in terms of an additional controlled act. It also seemed silly to me that we wouldn't do that when HPRAC, in its report New Directions, also recommended that this scope of practice be provided to doctors of naturopathic medicine. So I think the government here had an opportunity to (a) do what HPRAC had already recommended the government do, and (b) legitimize or put in legislation that which doctors of naturopathic medicine have already done for many, many years now. The government missed that opportunity by not agreeing to those changes in our amendments.

So I was pleased that we both—that is, the government and the New Democrats—put forward a specific college for naturopathic doctors, but I regret that the government wouldn't go that additional step further to actually put in place practices that have been undertaken by doctors of naturopathic medicine for years and years now, especially with respect to the controlled act of dispensing, selling and prescribing, that the government just wouldn't do it, because HPRAC had already recommended it. That part made no sense to me. Again, while it's great that we're going to have a new college, I think we missed an opportunity to make sure that it was going to get off to the best start it possibly could.

The government and New Democrats also created a new schedule to establish a new college for those who practise homeopathy. Originally, under Bill 171, the college would have included both health care professionals. But again, there were amendments in this section as a result of what we heard during the public hearings that clearly recognized that these health care professionals do very different things and wanted to have their own separate colleges, and both New Democrats and the government felt that at the end of the day they could work each under their own college and set in place what was necessary to have proper regulation and proper



protection of the public, which is what regulation really is all about.

So both ourselves and the government put forward numerous amendments with respect to the creation of the new college. They are similar in terms of other amendments that have been put forward for the creation of other colleges. The difference between the NDP amendments and the government amendments, again, had to do with the scope of practice and controlled acts.

The government defined the scope of practice for the new college as the following: "The practice of homeopathy is the assessment of body system disorders and treatment using homeopathic techniques to promote, maintain or restore health."

Our scope of practice was fuller than that and reflected recommendations that had been made to us by the Ontario Homeopathic Association, as follows: "The practice of homeopathy is the assessment of an individual's state of health based on homeopathic techniques and principles, and the identification and provision of appropriate homeopathic treatment using homeopathic medicines, techniques and natural substances to restore, maintain and promote physical, mental and emotional health."

Clearly, the government amendment was the one that was carried. The government did not put forward any controlled acts that homeopaths could provide, and we did, again based on recommendations that we received from the Ontario Homeopathic Association. The amendments we made with respect to controlled acts are as follows:

"(2) Subject to the regulations, a member may,

"(a) administer, by injection or inhalation, a prescribed homeopathic substance;

"(b) communicate a homeopathic diagnosis that may be identified through an assessment that uses homeopathic techniques and that includes assessing the individual's physical, mental and emotional conditions and symptoms, and used to prescribe the appropriate homeopathic remedy or therapy; and

"(c) prescribe, dispense, sell or compound a homeopathic medicine which is defined as a drug in the Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act."

Again, the government would not accept those three controlled acts that the NDP had put forward as amendments that the homeopaths would be allowed to participate in or carry out under regulation.

1630

I'm pleased that there are going to be two colleges. That's what we heard during the course of the public hearings, the need for that, but I think we could have gone further and really responded to the concerns and the wishes that had been put forward to us, particularly by the homeopathic association, by using the scope of practice they had put forward and by providing them with three controlled acts that they had asked for. That is not going to be the case. Perhaps at some point in time, after the college is established and has a good look at what happens, the association will come back and the college

will come back to the government and say, "These things are really necessary in order for homeopaths to very clearly and fully undertake their scope of practice and skill and profession," and at some point in time, we may have some change. But given how long it takes to open up these kinds of acts, I think we should have done it in the first place.

I want to also outline some concerns we had with respect to schedule Q. This was the development of the Psychotherapy Act. There has been much said about the problem of the original wording of schedule Q, which left social workers entirely out of the list of those health care professionals who could provide psychotherapy services. I don't know who was responsible for that oversight. I don't know what happened when the government drafters were putting this into place, but clearly, even before we started the public hearings, even before we started the debate on second reading, there was going to have to be a major change in this section to ensure that social workers, who have provided psychotherapy skills and services for many, many years now, were included somehow in the legislation to ensure that they could continue to be able to provide that skill and that practice for the people that they do. Frankly, that was very important in my part of the world as well, where there aren't many of these health care professionals to provide these kinds of services.

Each party during the course of clause-by-clause brought forward amendments that were designed to ensure that social workers would be included in the bill and could continue to practise and provide important health care services to Ontarians. At the end of the day, we went with the amendment that had been put forward by the government. The government had been working with the association of social workers and had agreed upon an amendment with them that they, as an association, believed would respond to the concerns of being left out in the first place—so as a result of a letter from May 7 from Dan Andreae that was read into the record by Mr. Fonseca during the clause-by-clause, which said: "I wish to commend the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care for his exemplary work in preparing and introducing a key and necessary amendment to Bill 171 that authorizes social work to perform the controlled act of psychotherapy." It was based on the confirmation from Dan Andreae and the association that they felt their problem was being fixed that both Mrs. Witmer and I withdrew our amendments around this issue and worked with the government on its amendments.

We are now in a position where social workers can continue to do their important work in the province of Ontario. I will never understand how they got left out in the first place, how that oversight occurred, but certainly it did cause a storm of immediate reaction. I know many members in this House were lobbied by social workers in their own ridings to get them included. This has now been done as a result of the amendments that were put forward.

There is another amendment that I put that wasn't accepted by the government. I just want to spend a bit of



time speaking about it. We heard during the course of the submissions at the public hearings a presentation by the Ontario Coalition of Mental Health Professionals, which represents probably 13 different groups of mental health professionals who provide a broad range of mental health services to Ontarians. As a result of their intervention, we were, through an amendment put forward by the NDP, able to change the title in this particular section to include both psychotherapy and registered mental health therapist as protected titles. But we had an amendment that went a little bit further than that. The amendment would have done the following on behalf of this organization: Section 95(1)(e) states that the council—that is, the council of the new college—may make regulations “defining specialties in the profession, providing for certificates relating to those specialties, the qualifications for and suspension and revocation of those certificates and governing the use of prescribed terms, titles or designations by members indicating a specialization in the profession.”

The key word there is “may,” that the college has that opportunity and can exercise it, but is not obligated or mandated to. Our amendment would have made it very clear that the new college is mandated and has an obligation to establish subspecialties in this profession. We did that because the coalition made it very clear that this issue of specialty subtitles was a very big issue for a number of their coalition partners, particularly for marriage and family therapists, who are regulated all over the US and in Quebec as a distinct profession. Right now, those titles don't appear in the bill. We have a title of psychotherapist, we have a title of registered mental health therapist; we do not have specialty subtitles under that category of mental health specialist, and we really need to.

There were a number of concerns that were raised at the public hearings about this and I know that members were lobbied about this by the coalition. I thought it would have made very good sense to make sure that the college does respond in a positive way in this regard and does not just walk away and decide that there are only going to be two titles that will be protected. It's important that we recognize that there are a number of subspecialties under mental health counsellors and registered mental health counsellors, and those titles have to be protected under the legislation. The college, when it is established, would need to do that.

So the language, regrettably, remains permissive; it is not mandatory. I hope that someone from the Ontario Coalition of Mental Health Professionals will be able to get a seat on the transition board for the new college and will be able to forcefully make the arguments that have to be made to ensure that the new college will have specialty subtitles in a way that the bill does not have right now. That really needs to be done to respond to the concerns that were raised by many in the coalition.

The other issue that came about under this particular section with respect to psychotherapy was the use of the doctor title. We heard from social workers and from

other organizations concerned that social workers in particular, and others, are not going to be able to use the doctor title, even though they are perfectly qualified in order to do so. It was interesting because HPRAC did make a recommendation in this regard, on the use of the doctor title. If I go back to their New Directions document that came out last July, HPRAC said a couple of things with respect to the doctor title:

“Other than convention, there does not seem to have been an underlying principle regarding the restriction on the use of the doctor title in the legislation. Arguments have been presented from time to time that allowing other regulated health professionals to use the title might lead to public confusion. There have also been concerns expressed that a person who had earned a degree in an unrelated field (such as Doctor of Engineering or Doctor of Musicology) might use the title ‘doctor’ while providing health care.

“The RHPA provisions continued the previous tradition of the Health Disciplines Act that prohibited anyone other than a dentist, physician or optometrist from using the title ‘doctor’ and added two new professions (psychology and chiropractic) entitled to use the designation, apparently based on what had become common usage in society....

“However, restrictions on the use of the title in Ontario are inconsistent. They permit the use of the doctor title for one group of professionals holding doctoral-level academic distinctions while denying all other professionals with comparable doctoral level achievements a similar privilege. For example, audiologists, speech-language pathologists, nurses or pharmacists who hold doctoral degrees in those professions may not use the doctor title while providing health services.

“The restriction on the use of the title ‘doctor’ applies only when the professional offers or provides health care to individuals. It does not stop a person who is engaged in academic research or administrative work from using the title. Thus, an audiologist with doctoral-level training could be called ‘Doctor’ while teaching advanced audiologic programs or conducting research on the subject, but could not use the title when treating or advising a patient 15 minutes later.

“Many individuals and organizations urged HPRAC to review the issue of protected titles in the RHPA with a view to achieving consistency and fairness.” HPRAC went on to say the following:

“HPRAC has concluded that this question is a social issue and not a health-related matter. International practice, emerging professions and practices that combine clinical and academic activities with research make the rigid title distinctions of the RHPA unworkable. Current provisions appear to be a vehicle for maintenance of status rather than of public protection.

“Therefore, the advisory council favours allowing registered professionals with an earned academic doctoral degree to use the title ‘doctor’ in the course of providing health care....” It lists the conditions under which they can do that.



1640

I moved an amendment on behalf of the NDP which used essentially the language that HPRAC had used in its New Directions document that was released last year. The government was not prepared to accept that recommendation. Ms. Witmer moved a recommendation that was similar. The government was not prepared to move on this issue of the doctor title at this time. I don't understand why the government wasn't prepared to do that. HPRAC spent a great deal of time on a specific chapter dealing with the use of the doctor title, made some specific recommendations about the conditions under which one could use the doctor title and made it very clear that the distinction now was more a social one than a matter of ensuring regulation and public safety with respect to the provision of healthcare services.

The government merely said that it will be dealt with at some time. I know how long it takes to open acts like this and I suspect it will be a long, long time before this issue is ever revisited. I really wish the government would accept either Ms. Witmer's amendments or my amendments in this regard which finally would have provided some clarification with respect to who can use the doctor title, under which circumstances and when. I think that would have been very appropriate. We heard that during the course of the public hearings, and I really don't understand the rationale for not doing it at this time.

I've got some other concerns under other schedules. I'll just go through them quickly. This has to do with the precautionary principle. The late Justice Archie Campbell made recommendations in his final report about the need to adopt the precautionary principle in a number of pieces of health legislation and labour legislation as well. We heard from both the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario and the Ontario Nurses' Association that in both schedule F and schedule K there should be a precautionary principle that specifically was put into the legislation in those particular schedules.

So I moved an amendment in schedule F that would have said the following:

"Precautionary principle

"(2) A board of health shall not await scientific certainty before acting."

That recommendation came to us by RAO and ONA. It was defeated by the government. The second time I did that was in schedule K, where I moved the following amendment:

"Precautionary principle

"(2) This act shall be interpreted in light of the principle that public health action should not wait for scientific certainty."

Again, that amendment came to us by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario and ONA in light of the work they were involved in with Justice Campbell, because they were involved in many consultations with him during the course of the development of his report. I do not understand why we could not have incorporated that precautionary principle into these two schedules, as

was recommended by Justice Campbell in his recommendations. He did tremendous work with respect to SARS, what happened and what we needed to do to make sure it didn't happen again. He was very clear that we should adopt this precautionary principle, that we should not wait until absolute scientific certainty in order to protect workers, especially workers who dealt with issues and circumstances like SARS. I regret that the government didn't want to move that principle, as per his request, in those two schedules.

Finally, with respect to schedule E of the Immunization of School Pupils Act, we had a very interesting presentation by Dr. Rosana Pellizzari, who is the chief medical officer of health for the Perth district health unit. She made it very clear that the province should amend section 10 of the Immunization of School Pupils Act to improve the protection of children from vaccine-preventable diseases, reduce the potential for suspension or exclusion of students from schools and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of data collection for immunization by medical officers of health. This could easily be accomplished by amending section 10 of this act so that any professional administering a vaccine for protection against a designated disease would be required to seek consent for the reporting of that immunization and, with such consent, be required to report that immunization to the chief medical officer of health.

She went on to say that in January in Perth county, the health unit had to send out letters to 343 students and their families, warning that they were going to be suspended from schools because of deficiencies in their immunization. Those letters were followed up by second letters, and it finally came down to the fact that 75% of those children had their immunizations up to date, but that information hadn't been made available to the public health unit.

So our amendment was very clear and said the following:

"(2) The physician or member shall, with the consent of the parent, forward a copy of the statement to the medical officer of health for the health district in which a child resides."

That would have made sure that up-to-date immunizations were promptly provided to the health unit so we didn't continue to have problems like we had in Perth county and problems that are happening right across the province.

Let me just conclude on that note by saying that I appreciated the work that went on between all three parties. I appreciated the work by the ministerial staff to accommodate our requests, by the political staff to see what amendments we could agree to and which parties could move some different amendments, and I think the process worked very well and we have a better bill as a result.

**The Acting Speaker:** Time for questions and comments.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** As always, here we go again. We're talking about the thorough, complete,



passionate and very insistent analysis of the member for Nickel Belt. I want to springboard from that comment to tell her that we'll miss her. I did say a little about that before, but I'm going to take a bit of my time to simply say thank you for your work. Thank you for your dedication to the job. Thank you for what you've done for us. No one can deny the passion that you bring to the job. No one can deny and indicate that you have not made every attempt that you have in order to better the people of Ontario. As we slowly wind down and depart—and I know the member doesn't like this kind of thing. That's a testimony again to what kind of character she is. But in front of that, I want to talk about her as a person, as a mom, as a wife and as a daughter.

Sometimes we forget to take a step back and say kind things to each other from day to day, and I'm not going to stand here and say anything but. I want the member to know that for the public service you've given, but more importantly for the person you have been to your family, to your friends and to your party, we have to say for the moment that we appreciate those efforts. We have to say—in some cases, my friend, grudgingly—tough work, tough challenges, but done in the spirit I know, over the years I've been here, with the intent to improve the life of people and, in a lot of cases, of those less fortunate and those who can't speak for themselves. There have been times where maybe we on this side, either government during those long years, have said, "My gosh, what's she doing again?" But they've rolled up their sleeves and tried to find solutions for you. So I want to say thank you for your contribution. I know this is your last speech, so God bless.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to follow up on the comments of the member for Brant. I know the member from Nickel Belt, Shelley Martel, has indicated that she's not running in the next election. I don't know whether this is definitely her last speech or not, but I just wanted to thank her for all the hard work she has put into this place over about 20 years. We know she has a long family history in this place as well. Her father, Elie Martel, represented the Sudbury area here at the Legislature when my father was here. Of course, her husband is the leader of the third party as well. But she also has a young family. I would think that part of her decision is that she hopes to have some more time and maybe a bit more of a normal life to spend some time with that growing family. I can only say that they grow up quickly, and all the time spent with them is time well spent that pays huge dividends down the road.

I just want to really thank you for all the hard work you've put into this place. I know you've been a passionate advocate for women's issues, for health issues, for family issues, fighting hard for autism funding, for example. No one would question the hard work and dedication you've put into this place over the past 20 years, so thank you very much for all that you've done, not only for the riding of Nickel Belt but for the province. I personally wish you well as you leave this place. I hope you get lots of quality time with those growing children

of yours and get somewhat more of a normal life than you've had in this place.

1650

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I have to say that I agree with all of the remarks of all the previous speakers in regard to the inspiration and role model that the member for Nickel Belt, Shelley Martel, has been to me personally.

I think that it's very appropriate that we take the opportunity to recognize and acknowledge that not only has Shelley been meticulous in her research and totally engaged in all of her responsibilities as a critic and, I know, in previous times with more important roles, maybe we would say, though I do think critic roles are extremely important in the way that this particular place works.

I have known her to be an extremely effective member of this Legislature in my very short time here. I know that the other members who have spoken have spent more time here with her than I have, but it has certainly been my pleasure and my honour to be sitting in the same party, in the same caucus and in the same Legislature as Shelley Martel.

We have so much to learn, and I think other members have a lot to learn, from the kind of vigour that Shelley has brought to the position as a member for provincial Parliament for every single one of the 20 years that she has spent here. She is a study in what it takes to be an effective member of this Legislature. She's a study in what it takes to be an amazing colleague and a study in what it takes to be a dedicated member of a political party who has been elected to represent the people of her riding, and she has done so extremely effectively, whether it is in regard to getting better health resources for the people of her community, whether it's being a passionate constituency worker with her and her staff, providing services to the people she represents or whether it is being, as I said earlier, an effective critic and someone who has done her homework every single time, as the government whip has said. It has certainly been my pleasure to work with her. The only regret that I have personally is that I know that although she has taught me very, very much, she has so much more to teach me, and I have so much more to learn.

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** I feel that it's only fitting that the next generation all gets up and speaks—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Smith:** Exactly—following on the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka, whose dad was here when my dad was here and whose dad was here when Shelley's dad was here. I think it's important that we go full circle. I know that the member for Don Valley West wanted to get up and speak and so many others on our side of the House did want to get up and pay tribute to you, Shelley, but I feel privileged to have the opportunity.

I've known—okay, now I'm going to get emotional; don't you. I've known Shelley for years. We were at St. Mike's together 20-some years ago. We won't go into the



details. We knew each other because we had a common childhood, because our fathers had served together on different sides of the House, but were certainly colleagues, northern colleagues, and had a strong respect for each other. So when I was at St. Mike's, I sought out Shelley and we became friends, given our common past. We certainly had some good years together at St. Mike's. I remember vividly, in 1987, going to see Shelley in Sudbury when she told me she was going to run, and I remember oh, so vividly saying, "Are you crazy?" Now here we both are.

For the years that you've given and for the service that you've given to your community for so many years representing Nickel Belt with that strong voice and that determination and that commitment to your folks back home and for the service that you've given to us here—I know that among my colleagues, the comments that have been made are about the "heavy lifter," the one who has carried the load, the one who has really had all the heavy files since I've been here—and for the work that you've done with me on long-term care, I say thank you. Thank you for showing us how an effective critic can work. Thank you for driving us crazy at times, but for always staying focused on what is important. The quiz for the pages is now going to be that much tougher to figure out who the former pages were now that you are leaving our little group, but I wish you well. I know that you'll appreciate the time with your family. It's so well deserved.

**The Acting Speaker:** The Chair recognizes the member for reply.

**Ms. Martel:** I guess I won't talk about the bill in my two minutes. I am a little taken aback, so let me just do the best I can.

I want to thank everybody for their generous comments. I didn't expect the day to end like this. I want to thank all of those who spoke personally, whom I have known for a number of years, and thank you for the work you've done with me over those years.

I can tell everybody that this was not an easy decision to make. It's very difficult to go, in fact, when my husband stays and is still the leader, and when I have colleagues whom I care very much about and whom I'd like to be able to continue to work with, and when we have staff in our caucus who have been very loyal and very dedicated over the years whom I'd like to continue to be able to work with and support.

Having said that, it will be 20 years—September 10, 1987—and over 12 years of that has been as a mom with two young kids. In those days when I had the two of them, going through the airport between Toronto and Sudbury, when I had Sarah in this hand and Jonathan in a carrier in this hand and a diaper bag over one side and a briefcase over the other, I thought that nothing could be worse than those days and those trips. But in fact, as they grow older now, we have different challenges. They are 12 and 9, and they are very active in many things. They have concerns about school and about friends and about all of these things that really need to become a priority.

They are very good—because this is the only life they have ever known. So I think they are very well adapted. Maybe someday one or both of them will go into politics. I can't speak for that. That would be a fourth generation, if that actually happened. I did recognize, and I think Howie did too, that I really need to bow out and have them become a priority in a way that they really haven't been for a long, long time.

So that really is what's driving it. This has nothing to do with the leadership of my husband. I was asked that question—as if I would tell the media that anyway.

It was a very personal decision that was very difficult to make, because my dad was there for 20 years and I was there for 20, so it is an end of an era, in some ways, at home.

I recognize that from time to time in those 20 years I have been very partisan. I would not be my father's daughter, I suspect, if I were not partisan. But I hope people recognize that it was done in a spirit of trying to represent the issues that came to me from my constituents, both in Sudbury East and then in Nickel Belt, and that also came to me from those many groups that I've had the privilege of working with over the last number of years, and specifically in the last number of years, with parents who have children with autism.

I do want to say that it has been a privilege to serve. I've been lucky enough to win five elections. I appreciate the generosity and the goodwill of those people, first in Sudbury East and then in Nickel Belt, who voted for me. I recognize that they did not all vote for me, but I certainly hope that at the end of the day they recognized that I tried to raise their issues at Queen's Park and that we worked very, very hard in our constituency office to try to deal with the concerns of people who came through the door. That is the work that I am most proud of. That is what has always been, for me, the most important thing about this job. Even though I was in cabinet—and I appreciated that experience as well—the real meaning of all of this for me has been the people who came through the door: support recipients whom we get a cheque for, injured workers for whom we got compensation, disabled people for whom we got disability benefits, people for whom we got birth certificates, travel grants, all of those things that all of us try to do. For that I am very grateful, because I have tremendously loyal, very competent, capable staff who did 90% of the work while I did 10%, who were very good to help people.

I want to thank all of the people who allow this place to run, who have been here for many years as well. I've had the privilege of working with those in the committees branch, either legislative research or committee Chairs or Hansard; the table officers, some of whose faces have changed over the years since I've been here; the various Speakers; all of the people in the assembly; security; and everyone else I'm missing—and I'm sorry about that—who make the place operate. Sometimes it doesn't operate that well, but it's a heck of a lot better system than we see in some other countries, and we certainly need to support it as much as we can.

So I say to all of you, I'm not going to be going that far. I really won't be able to, given who my husband is and my link to this place, for a long, long time. I will be stopping by. I will find some other forums to continue to raise those issues that I care a lot about, because I'm not going to step away from them even though I leave active political life.

It has been a privilege to serve. It has been an enormous and incredible opportunity to be both in government and in opposition. I hope we have worked as hard as we could on behalf of the constituents who were good enough to send me here. I really want to thank all members who are here today for your very generous and gracious comments that I was not expecting.

It isn't an easy business. It wasn't easy for me; it's not easy for any of you. I understand exactly what it's like to be a part of public office. I know there's an election coming, and who knows what the changes will be? So I just say to everyone that I wish you well in whatever happens next.

I was asked at TFO last night what I would do next. I said I have no clue, and that is true. I just want to spend some time with my kids. It's a little bit nerve-racking to leave, because essentially this is the only job I've ever known—I worked for the Workers' Compensation Board for six months before I came here after university. So I haven't known much else and don't know what's out

there and what I can do, but I guess I'll figure that out at some point. The most important thing is to get through the next election, and I'm telling all of you that I'm working as hard as I can to elect another New Democrat in Nickel Belt—but get through that and then be back and spend a lot of time with my kids and see what the future holds from there.

Thank you, all of you, very much for being so generous.

*Applause.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Any further debate? Seeing none, Mr. Smitherman has moved third reading of Bill 171, An Act to improve health systems by amending or repealing various enactments and enacting certain Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker:** The deputy government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until Monday, June 4, at 1:30 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 1702.*



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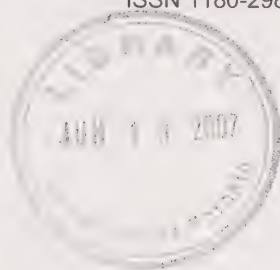
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of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
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Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 4 June 2007**

**Lundi 4 juin 2007**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 4 June 2007

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 4 juin 2007

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### WEARING OF PINS

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: On behalf of the International Diabetes Federation and the Canadian Diabetes Association, I ask for unanimous consent for members to wear the blue "Unite for diabetes" pin in the Legislature today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Agreed? Agreed.

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** Welcome to Ontario, land of broken promises and tax hikes. Dalton McGuinty is again promising not to raise our taxes. In today's National Post we read a headline, "McGuinty Pledges Not to Raise Taxes." This is déjà vu all over again. In 2003, Dalton McGuinty went on TV to promise he wouldn't raise our taxes and then brought in the largest personal income tax increase in the history of Ontario, the health tax, where you pay more and you get less; raised taxes on employers; raised taxes for parents who send their children to independent schools; hiked taxes on seniors; cancelled the personal income tax cut; eliminated the increase of the personal surtax threshold; hiked tobacco taxes; tripled the taxes on the diamond mine up near Attawapiskat; and don't forget the increased electricity rates and increased driver's licence fees.

An increased fee is a tax, a cancelled tax cut is essentially a tax, a health tax is a tax, and a promise from Dalton McGuinty appears to be—proves to be—a future broken promise. So I put out a word of warning: There is a serial promise breaker on the loose. He's considered armed and dangerous: armed with a Liberal caucus and dangerous to your wallet. His name is Dalton McGuinty. He goes by the alias of Pinocchio, and when you see him, his pants are usually on fire.

### TRIBUTES

**Ms. Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek):** I rise today to point out a small change in the rules around the consumption of wine in this province. For a long time you

could go to a winery, you could enjoy all the things that were there, but you could only buy a bottle of wine. You couldn't buy a glass of wine to wander around in the vineyards and the lovely areas, but now you can. This government has moved to allow people when they visit a winery to buy a glass of good wine from Ontario and enjoy it while they're visiting.

I want to take this opportunity, which might be one of my last to speak in this Legislature this session, to raise a glass of good Ontario wine to all the remarkable people who work inside this building—from Harold in the north-east parking lot, to all the people in security, the pages, the folks at the table, our foodservices, our cleaning staff, everybody who is so amazingly kind and professional, who have made this experience for me very special.

I also want to comment on not just the people in this Legislature, who are here mostly because they believe in something and so they have become political, but on the people in my riding and across this province who will never make a headline but work every day, through their work, through volunteerism, to make this society of ours a more civilized and wonderful place. It has been an honour and a privilege to work alongside them to make those improvements.

In my maiden speech, I wondered if I might have made a grave personal and professional error in doing this, but I have not. I have no regrets. It has been an honour.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** Coming once again to a television near you: More promises that you can't believe from Dalton McGuinty. Almost four years ago, Dalton McGuinty's advertising friends put together a slick commercial where Dalton made his memorable promise. We all remember Dalton McGuinty standing in front of a red brick wall looking Ontarians in the eye in living rooms across the province and saying, "I won't raise your taxes, but I won't lower them either."

The people of Ontario believed him. Then, in record time, Dalton McGuinty broke that promise with the single largest tax hike in Ontario history. He went ahead with the tax hike even though he had to change the law to do it. He had to amend the Taxpayer Protection Act, the very law that was meant to protect Ontario's taxpayers from people like him.

Now he has the nerve to make the same promise again, but he says he really means it this time. He says



that he won't break it this time, and he expects Ontarians to believe him again. The people of Ontario are smarter than that. They have seen this movie before, and they know how badly it ends. They know that Dalton McGuinty tried to make fools of them, they know that the Dalton McGuinty government will say anything to get re-elected, and they know that a man is only as good as his word. People should be able to believe their politicians, but after breaking more than 50 promises, Dalton McGuinty has proven he is untrustworthy. No amount of slick advertising and fancy commercials will make the people of Ontario trust Dalton McGuinty or believe his promises again.

The reviews are in, the movie bombed at the box office—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

#### EVENTS IN NIPISSING

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** It was a busy weekend in Nipissing this past weekend. On Friday and Saturday, hundreds of Callander residents, young and old, and visitors from across the province enjoyed Celtfest, which I'm proud to say is the only Scottish-Celtic festival of its kind in northern Ontario. Since its creation, the festival has attracted more than 5,000 visitors and participants directly to our community. I'd like to thank the organizers—Colleen Porter and all of her great team, as well as the town of Callander, for hosting such a fabulous event over the weekend.

On Saturday morning, I was out in Commanda at the Commanda Community Centre auction to help fundraise to support the community centre. There were incredible items up for auction, and I'm delighted to announce that they raised over \$5,400 to benefit their community centre. Congratulations to Carol Hoffman and her great team, who put together such a successful event.

Also on Saturday, in Powassan, the Powassan Country Depot held a benefit in support of Justin Byers and his family. Justin, just six days before his 16th birthday, had an injury in school and is now facing life as a paraplegic. I'm pleased to tell the House that this benefit, along with several others in the Powassan community, has raised well over \$40,000 for Justin's family. I want to, please, note for the House today that Morgan and Maddison McIsaac, together with their parents, Karen and Peter, are here today. Morgan and Maddison, who go to Maple-ridge Public School in Powassan, participated in a volleyball-a-thon which raised over \$3,000 for Justin Byers and his family.

There's so much great work going on in my riding. I'm proud to be a part of it and look forward to attending many more events in—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** Abraham Lincoln said, "You can fool some of the people all of the time and

all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all of the time." The Premier fooled all the people of Ontario in the last election, when he said he would not raise our taxes. He gave his solemn word that he would not introduce any new taxes and that he would not raise existing taxes without the consent of voters. He did not keep his word even though he promised in writing, on September 11, 2003, that he would not raise taxes. He claims it was because Ernie Eves left behind a deficit, yet his own party claimed that the deficit in 2003 would be \$5 billion, months before the election was held. And they claimed, up until budget day in 2004, that they would not raise taxes.

They broke their promise on taxes, as they have broken their promises on so many other issues. They fooled all of us in 2003. They will not fool us again.

1340

#### DIABETES

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** Today I had the pleasure to visit the Changing Diabetes bus, which had been travelling around the world, raising awareness about diabetes and encouraging people to take action on their own behalf to change the future of diabetes. According to the Canadian Diabetes Association, there are over 800,000 Ontarians living with the disease, and the number is expected to rise to 1.5 million by 2016.

It's important that Ontarians learn about diabetes and how best to manage it. Prevention is critical to avoid serious complications such as cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, blindness and amputations.

That said, each and every day, people with diabetes experience many medical and financial burdens, and they deserve our support. Living with diabetes costs money, and OHIP does not cover all that is needed. It's difficult for many to afford to buy healthy foods while also paying out of pocket for medications, devices and supplies to help manage diabetes. Approximately 25% of Ontarians with diabetes say they cannot afford to buy the medications, devices and supplies prescribed by their doctor. Only eight of the 17 diabetes medications approved as safe and effective for care are available to Ontarians under the Ontario drug benefit plan. Yet, according to the Canadian Diabetes Association, for every dollar invested in government up front in helping people manage their disease, \$4 is saved across the health care system in treating later diabetes complications.

We need to expand fair and equitable access to medications, devices, supplies and other social assistance supports such as ODSP, OW, special diet and the Trillium drug program, and we need to do it now.

#### JACK YEILDING

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** I rise in the House today with a wonderful story to acknowledge a very special constituent of mine in Oakville who should be an example to us all. His name is Jack Yeilding and

he's four years old. Jack has epilepsy, but he recently decided he was going to help the Sick Kids Foundation by raising money to help those in need at the hospital. This remarkable four-year-old organized a garage sale and lemonade stand, which was held on May 26. His original goal was to raise \$1,000. He has raised, to date, \$13,000 for Sick Kids hospital, with more donations still coming in.

His commitment to Sick Kids has resulted in their inviting Jack to now be an official ambassador of the hospital, and the Toronto Argonauts have invited Jack to their home opener as their guest.

On behalf of the entire Legislature, I'd like to congratulate Jack. We're all very proud of your accomplishment and your desire to help those who are in need.

On the afternoon of the event, it was attended by the mayor of Oakville, and all the firefighters from Oakville showed up with a fire truck. Nancy Clark, my former assistant, who has epilepsy herself, showed up and had a wonderful conversation with Jack's mother. The paramedics showed up and brought a donation as well. Just about everyone in the community chipped in to help this young man, who, as I said at the start, should be an example to all of us in this House.

#### BEN UNDERWOOD

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce):** I rise in the Legislature today to congratulate an outstanding young man from my riding on a wonderful achievement. Ben Underwood, a grade 7 student at Turnberry Central Public School, was awarded top honours in the junior division at the Canada Wide Science Fair in Truro, Nova Scotia, this past month. Ben's project, titled *Cultivating Cultivators*, was judged to be the top project at the fair and earned Ben a platinum medal for his efforts. Ben was also honoured with a gold medal at the awards ceremony on Friday, May 18. Ben's project was one of 200 others in the junior division who had earned their way to the national competition following success in their respective districts from across the country.

Ben was awarded \$1,500 for the gold medal award and \$5,000 for the platinum award. In addition to this, Ben was also awarded a \$2,000 scholarship to the University of Western Ontario to further his studies upon graduation.

These accolades are nothing new to Ben's parents as his brother Matthew has also won several honours in science fair competitions. Ben is also in attendance today for the annual Sci-Tech Ontario Queen's Park Science Fair.

I would like to recognize two other young men from my riding here for the science fair: Salomon Appavoo and Grant Sparling.

I ask this House to join with me in congratulating these exceptional young men on their recent achievements.

#### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay–Superior North):** I rise in the House today to highlight the health care renaissance that's occurring in northwestern Ontario.

Since taking office, the McGuinty government has invested more than \$83 million in our communities to increase access to home care, hospital services and primary care. While the Tories closed hospitals across the north, our government is opening new ones and adding brand new services. For the first time ever, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre will provide angioplasty services. Wilson Memorial General Hospital in Marathon will provide cataract surgeries, and a new long-term-care facility will be built at McCausland Hospital in Terrace Bay. Our historic investment in northern hospitals will ensure that people in my riding and, indeed, all those across the north are able to receive better care closer to home.

Our residents also have more access to more doctors thanks to our family health teams. To date, more than 12,000 northerners who previously did not have access to a family doctor now do.

Our government's record stands in stark contrast to that of the previous government, which cut funding to Thunder Bay district hospitals by 18%. Presently, the Conservative health care platform consists of slashing \$2.5 billion from our health care budget. That, sadly and suspiciously, sounds like the same old story; just a different Tory.

#### VISITORS

**Ms. Deborah Matthews (London North Centre):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to welcome three guests I have in the members' gallery today: Ryan Major from St. John School in London, Ontario; his mom, Veronica McAlea-Major, from London; and his aunt from Sarnia, Marie Ceponis. Welcome to you all.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to acknowledge a couple of my constituents from the great riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore who are here: Jay and Terri Brown, who are the parents of our page from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, Liam Brown. Welcome.

**Ms. Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to acknowledge the presence of the president of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce joining us today in the members' gallery: Sophia Aggelonitis. Welcome.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I beg leave to present the first report, 2007, from the standing



committee on regulations and private bills and move its adoption.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Agreed? Agreed.

Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Ms. Horwath:** Yes, I do, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you very much. I simply want to thank the members of committee for the work they have done on presenting this report today. I want to thank legislative counsel and legislative research for the assistance they gave to committee members in doing the committee's work. I want to thank the clerks as well, the Hansard people, the communications people and everyone that it takes to do the work and business of a committee. I thank them very, very much.

At this point, I want to move the adjournment of the debate.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

1350

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### SIMCOE DAY ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR LE JOUR DE SIMCOE

Mr. Barrett moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 234, An Act to amend the Municipal Act, 2001 to name Civic Holiday Simcoe Day / Projet de loi 234, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2001 sur les municipalités de façon à désigner le congé civique comme Jour de Simcoe.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant):** My inspiration for this proposed legislation is John Graves Simcoe. The bill amends the Municipal Act, 2001. If a local or regional municipality passes a bylaw declaring the first Monday in August in every year as a retail business holiday, the day shall be known as Simcoe Day, in addition to the name, if any, that the bylaw declares for that day. The short title for this proposed legislation is the Simcoe Day Act, 2007.

### ONTARIO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RATES ACT, 2007

#### LOI DE 2007 SUR LES TAUX D'AIDE SOCIALE DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. McMeekin moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 235, An Act to establish the Ontario Social Assistance Rates Board / Projet de loi 235, Loi établissant la Commission ontarienne des taux d'aide sociale.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Aldershot):** I believe it's time—in fact, well past time—for this bill, a bill which establishes an Ontario Social Assistance Rates Board with the function of providing specific recommendations annually regarding social assistance rates under the Ontario Works Act, 1997, and the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997.

## LIQUOR LICENCE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT (LIQUOR LABELS), 2007

### LOI DE 2007 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI A TRAIT AUX PERMIS D'ALCOOL (ÉTIQUETAGE DES BOISSONS ALCOOLIKUES)

Mr. Arnott moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 236, An Act to amend the Liquor Licence Act and the Liquor Control Act / Projet de loi 236, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les permis d'alcool et la Loi sur les alcools.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member may wish to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo–Wellington):** I'm very pleased that the Minister of Government Services, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Health Promotion are present in this House. I'm sure that each of these ministers would agree with me that we need to do more to raise awareness about fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

This bill that I've introduced this afternoon would amend the Liquor Licence Act and the Liquor Control Act to require sellers and manufacturers to affix a warning label to containers of liquor cautioning pregnant women about the risks of alcohol consumption.

I would appreciate the support from all members of this House on this bill.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move that, notwithstanding any other order of the House, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, June 4, 2007, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has moved government notice of motion number 375. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1356 to 1401.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne  
Balkissoon, Bas  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Bentley, Christopher  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Brotten, Laurel C.  
Brownell, Jim  
Caplan, David  
Chan, Michael  
Colle, Mike  
Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Dombrowsky, Leona

Duguid, Brad  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Fonseca, Peter  
Gravelle, Michael  
Hoy, Pat  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Levac, Dave  
Marsales, Judy  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McMeekin, Ted  
Mitchell, Carol  
Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Parsons, Ernie

Peters, Steve  
Phillips, Gerry  
Pupatello, Sandra  
Racco, Mario G.  
Ramal, Khalil  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Takhar, Harinder S.  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Zimmer, David

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Arnott, Ted  
Barrett, Toby  
Bisson, Gilles  
Elliott, Christine  
Ferreira, Paul  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Horwath, Andrea  
Klees, Frank

Kormos, Peter  
MacLeod, Lisa  
Martel, Shelley  
Martiniuk, Gerry  
Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia  
Murdoch, Bill  
O'Toole, John

Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Prue, Michael  
Runciman, Robert W.  
Savoline, Joyce  
Tabuns, Peter  
Tascona, Joseph N.  
Wilson, Jim  
Yakubuski, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 46; the nays are 24.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

### APPOINTMENT OF HOUSE OFFICERS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I'd like to bring to the attention of the members of the House the following appointments that have been made to the list of officers who serve the House:

Effective March 22, 2007, Lisa Freedman assumed new responsibilities as Clerk of Journals and procedural research.

Effective today, Tonia Grannum assumes responsibilities as Clerk of Committees, and she will serve at the table in a permanent capacity.

I'm certain that all members will join me in congratulating Ms. Freedman and Ms. Grannum as they assume their responsibilities. Congratulations, and welcome.

### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

#### SENIORS' MONTH

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** For more than 20 years, this House has recog-

nized Seniors' Month as a time to celebrate the contributions that older Ontarians have made and continue to make to our province: as leaders in our communities, mentors and volunteers, as friends and family. Throughout June, communities across the province are hosting awards ceremonies, information fairs, seminars and socials to honour their elders in keeping with this fine tradition.

I rise in the House today to tell you about some seniors I met last Thursday who give a whole new meaning to OLD: Ontarians living dynamically. Our Search for Senior Stars last Thursday gave us a glimpse of some amazingly talented people who all deserve applause for their willingness to embrace life. There was Mary Watts, who danced her way to first place; Charles Hayter, who sang and danced his way to second; and singer Lenny Martin, who took third place even though his taped accompaniment didn't work. These senior stars are shining examples of keeping active and involved. Sharing their talents contributes not only to their own quality of life but to their communities.

This is the essence of the theme of this year's Seniors Month—Active Living: Share Your Experience. Canada's seniors are living up to this year's theme not only by keeping physically active but by volunteering. According to the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, seniors volunteered a total of 179 million hours in the year 2000. They volunteered in arts, culture and recreation organizations, social service organizations and religious organizations.

Our government appreciates the contributions seniors make to our community and continues to recognize their work. In fact, tomorrow Ontario will be honouring 141 Orillia-area volunteers at the Volunteer Service Awards. The honourees include a number of seniors who are being recognized for 60 years of volunteer service. These volunteers are only a few of the older Ontarians who have helped build our province and who have worked hard and continue to contribute to the prosperity that we all enjoy today. All this to say: Seniors are important to Ontario.

I know that every member of this Legislature works hard to support seniors in their constituencies and all across Ontario. This government is committed to helping improve the quality of life for seniors.

There are about 1.6 million seniors in Ontario today. That number is expected to double to 3.2 million in the next 20 years. People are staying active in their senior years. They are staying strong-willed, independent and socially engaged. Ontarians are remaining healthy throughout their later years. Of course, many need services to assist them to continue living actively.

That is why our government is working on several levels to support seniors. To cite a few examples, we have made considerable progress with our wait times strategy. As of May 2007, our figures have shown reductions in knee replacements by 27%, cataract surgeries by 49%, cancer surgeries by 14% and hip replacement surgeries by 28%. We have also made substantial invest-



ments in home care and have eliminated mandatory retirement, recognizing that, while we have made progress in these areas, there is always more work to be done.

Seniors' Month is our collective way of acknowledging and thanking seniors for their tremendous contributions to our province. Each year, we develop materials to help our increasingly diverse communities promote Seniors' Month, including a poster now available in 19 languages, from Spanish, Arabic and Chinese to Cree, Tamil, Urdu and others.

In closing, I encourage all Ontarians to thank their lucky stars—their own senior stars, whether that's an older relative, neighbour, friend or colleague. Thank them for making Ontario one of the best places in the world to live.

1410

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Response?

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** On behalf of John Tory and all members of the Progressive Conservative caucus, I congratulate all seniors in Ontario. June is Seniors' Month, a time to honour and celebrate the contributions made by our parents, grandparents and all seniors in our communities and province. Our great province and its prosperity was built by hard-working senior citizens, whose contributions have secured our and our children's future.

I'm proud to share that in my riding of Cambridge seniors are active and vital contributors to the fabric of our community. Each day, thousands of seniors come together at three seniors' centres—the David Durward Centre, the Ted Wake Lounge and the Allan Reuter Centre—to take part in a variety of recreational projects. These centres have existed for many years. They maintain a warm and welcoming environment that promotes companionship, peer support and opportunities to keep individuals mentally and physically active.

Cambridge is the proud home of the Ancient Mariners Canoe Club, a travel club for seniors; the Cambridge Seniors Woodworking Club; the Cambridge Seniors Choir; the Cambridge Mall Walkers; and the Chesley Lake Campers.

Recently in my riding, the Ancient Mariners Canoe Club hosted a canoe trip down the Grand River for a group of first-year medical students who were spending the weekend in Cambridge. It was wonderful to see these young, eager students learning from the seniors of Cambridge.

I'm also proud to share with you information about a seniors' education day that I host annually for the senior citizens of Cambridge. This event is attended by hundreds of seniors who come to learn and be entertained. The focus of the event is educating my senior constituents about issues such as fraud prevention and protection against other scams. Of course, the entertainment is also a big reason why this event is a sellout year after year.

This year's event will be held on Friday, June 15, at the Cambridge Newfoundland Club, and I should say that the club is contributing the club premises at no cost to the

seniors. The speakers this year will include Yvonne Heltke of the Waterloo Regional Police fraud branch; John Grotheer, president and CEO of Cambridge and North Dumfries Hydro; Monica Morrison of Community Support Connections, formerly Meals on Wheels; city councillors Linda Whetham and Karl Kiefer, who will be explaining the programs for seniors offered by the city; Cathy Downer of the Caregiver Support Program of Cambridge; and Adam Timoon, a guitarist and comedian, who will provide entertainment. Adam was the headliner at the old Seaway Hotel in Toronto for many years, and he is contributing his services in entertaining the seniors. Also, our disc jockey is Christopher Kekes, a good friend of mine and a member of our local Kinsmen Club. He always plays some great music for the seniors.

As it is Seniors' Month, I want to take this opportunity to salute and thank our seniors for their commitment to healthy living and building healthy communities.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** On behalf of New Democrats, it's my pleasure to respond to the statement made by the minister responsible for seniors. It is Seniors' Month, and it's important that we recognize the enormous contribution that has been made to Ontario by Ontario seniors to the economic, social, cultural and artistic fabric of this province.

So many have made incredible sacrifices in two world wars and other international conflicts to safeguard the values and freedoms that we enjoy today. So many, through their working lives, have played a key role in the creation of the public institutions that we use and cherish. And so many, after they retired from paid work, have then spent thousands and thousands of volunteer hours supporting non-profit organizations in our communities to do the important work that they do. So we are indebted to Ontario seniors and it is fitting that we honour them in Ontario during the month of June.

If the government was really interested in honouring our seniors during the month of June, the government could do some of the following:

Number one, keep your election promise. In the last election, the Liberals said that they were going to invest in better nursing home care, providing an additional \$6,000 in care for every resident. As of the last budget, the government has only invested \$2,300 of the promised \$6,000 for the frail and elderly who live in Ontario's long-term-care homes.

Here is what the Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors had to say on budget day, March 22, 2007. "In the lead up to the last election, the Liberals identified increased funding for long-term care—funding that would go directly to improving the level of care of residents—as one of their top priorities. Today, they failed to keep their word. This is a huge disappointment, especially after the Liberals promised after coming to power that they would lead a revolution in long-term care," stated Donna Rubin, executive director. The government only has a few months to go and a large financial commitment to make. We'll see whether or not this promise gets kept.



Another promise that the government made during the election was to reinstate hands-on care per resident per day for all seniors in Ontario long-term-care homes. As I stand here today, there is no standard of hands-on care for any senior in any home in this province, despite the election promise. There hasn't been a standard in place since 1996, when the Conservatives cancelled the standard of care that had been put in place by the NDP government. We heard again and again during the course of the public hearings on Bill 140 that there had to be a standard of care and that it should be 3.5 hours of hands-on care per resident per day. The United Senior Citizens of Ontario told the government that last year, and the government didn't respond. We don't have a standard of care in place. The government says they're going to do it by regulation. I don't know when, I don't know how, I don't know how many hours it will be, but certainly that election promise hasn't been kept either.

The government's own seniors' advisory committee, on March 22, 2005, passed a motion calling on this government to establish a seniors' ombudsman for long-term-care home residents and people receiving home care services. I just want to quote their letter to the honourable Minister of Health and the honourable minister responsible for seniors. On August 18, 2005, they said:

"Representing more than one million seniors, the members of SAC LTC support having a seniors' ombudsman to advocate for long-term care (LTC) home residents, and to resolve consumer complaints about home care provided within Ontario communities. We feel the current system, which relies solely on government staff, is simply not responsive enough to ensure seniors' rights are protected.... We recommend the ombudsman be independent of any ministerial control or influence, and would have the power to investigate concerns and ... direct the government to take remedial action...."

I moved, during the course of the committee hearings on Bill 140, that there would be an ombudsman in place, and the government voted it down. So much for this government listening to its own seniors' advisory committee.

The government has been told the following repeatedly by the United Senior Citizens of Ontario. For example, with respect to P3 hospitals: "The USCO calls on the Premier and his government to immediately put an end to all P3 hospitals in the province of Ontario."

Secondly, with respect to the health care tax: "The government of Ontario must re-examine this tax. It is wrong, and the USCO strongly urges the government to withdraw this punitive tax."

Number three, delisting of services like chiropractic and eye exams: "The United Senior Citizens of Ontario implore the Ontario government to re-examine these issues."

The list goes on and on.

Yes, it is absolutely right that during the month of June we pay tribute to those seniors who have contributed so much to the development of this province. But if this government really wants to put its money where its

mouth is, this government would keep its promise on funding for long-term-care homes, this government would keep its promise on reinstating minimum standards, this government would listen to its own advisory council and establish an ombudsman for long-term care, and the government would deal with the other recommendations that have been made by the United Senior Citizens of Ontario.

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Today we have in the Speaker's gallery the US Special Envoy of the Secretary of State for Wildlife Trafficking Issues. Help me welcome Bo Derek as our guest.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent for all parties to speak for up to five minutes to recognize the passing of a former member of this House.

**The Speaker:** Agreed? Agreed.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean-Carleton):** We were talking about the movie 10, which I never saw because apparently I hadn't been born yet. They're all making fun of me here.

1420

## BOB MacQUARRIE

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean-Carleton):** On behalf of John Tory and the Progressive Conservative caucuses both past and present, I'm honoured to be able to spend a few minutes to remark on the outstanding contribution of Robert "Bob" MacQuarrie.

I want to first remark that I feel a certain kinship with Bob MacQuarrie. On the day of his visitation, I was able to become acquainted with his family, his friends and many of his colleagues and I learned a number of wonderful things about him, which I'll share with you in a few minutes.

Bob MacQuarrie and I shared a few things in common. Bob and I were both born in the Maritimes. He was from Prince Edward Island, and I'm from Nova Scotia. We both made our homes in Canada's capital—which is every Canadian's second hometown—and we raised our families there. We both became involved in civic affairs. Both of us felt compelled to serve our communities—he, from 1959 until 1985 in various capacities, whether it was with the school board, the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton or as reeve of the township of Gloucester, and, of course, finally as MPP for Carleton East.

Our paths never crossed until his passing, but since then I have learned an awful lot about and from Bob MacQuarrie.

As I mentioned, Bob served as the Progressive Conservative MPP for Carleton East from 1981 until



1985. Under Premier Davis's leadership, he was parliamentary secretary to both the Attorney General and Solicitor General of the day. It was then that Bob secured the capital funding for one of the most important projects in Orleans: the Orleans Boulevard overpass.

But Mr. MacQuarrie will be known and respected and remembered for so much more than his good work in this Legislature. He was a community builder.

He built the former township of Gloucester by becoming a pioneer in structured municipal planning.

He built a diversified economic base for the township of Gloucester so that it would become more than a bedroom community.

He built expanded recreational services and facilities in Ottawa's east end. One such facility was the Pine View Municipal Golf Course, where he would later be memorialized.

Former PC MP and National Capital Commission chair Jean Piggott, a friend of mine and Mr. MacQuarrie's, once said of Bob, "He was a dedicated public servant who gave richly of his time to help build the fast-growing municipality then known as the township of Gloucester."

Bob MacQuarrie was also a community leader.

He led the fight against the National Capital Commission's idea for a so-called model community at Carlsbad Springs.

He also led the township of Gloucester in attaining its own provincial legislation to increase green spaces and parks, which I can say the constituents of ours in Ottawa still benefit from today.

Betty Stewart, Bob's predecessor, said upon his retirement as Gloucester reeve, "MacQuarrie is usually three steps ahead of everyone else." I would say that's a pretty good place to be: three steps ahead of everyone else. But those who would know this best are Bob MacQuarrie's family and friends and his constituents.

On the occasion of his visitation on January 16 at Pine View Municipal Golf Course, I was fortunate to get to know some of Bob's family and his constituents.

For a so-called rookie in this Legislature, attending Bob's memorial was a good lesson for me. Bob showed me what the true measure of a politician really is. It's true, Bob had a distinguished and lengthy career in politics, and although Bob was successful politically, it's not going to be what people remember about Bob.

I learned from Bob MacQuarrie, albeit after his passing, that the true measure of a politician is more than just winning an election and carrying out the duties we are asked to do to serve the public. Rather, Bob taught me that it is the sincerity of every action, the attention to the little things that matter to our constituents and the genuine affection toward our communities that makes a person like Bob so special.

Yes, Bob MacQuarrie did his job. He built a city and he rose to some of the highest offices in our community. But those accomplishments pale in comparison to how Bob MacQuarrie conducted himself. What set Bob apart from the rest of the pack was his decency. His constitu-

ents remembered him as a man who was always kind, a man who always had a nice thing to say, a man who always kept his word.

He was humble too. Wesley J. Clark wrote to the city of Ottawa, saying that Bob MacQuarrie believed that everyone ought to receive fair and equal treatment regardless of their station. Bob was in many ways what everyone in this Legislature aspires to be.

During the wake for Bob MacQuarrie, I met a gentleman who had worked at the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton for Mr. MacQuarrie. He told me how extraordinary Bob really was. He told me that Bob's common touch was not so common anymore and he told me that Bob was a different kind of politician, one that everyone liked and respected, because Bob, in the smallest of ways, made him feel important. Bob was decent, genuine and sincere, he told me. That is how Bob MacQuarrie was remembered by his constituents.

On behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party and John Tory, I want to extend to Bob MacQuarrie's family, those in the gallery today, a heartfelt thank you for such a wonderful man and for how much he contributed to our party, to the people of Ontario, and more specifically for sharing him with the people of Gloucester and Carleton East. As they'd say in the Maritimes, Bob, you done good for yourself, b'y.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** I rise on behalf of my leader, Howard Hampton, and the New Democratic caucus to extend to the family and to those who knew Bob the best our condolences.

I did not know Bob personally, obviously because I got here in 1990. He left this place quite suddenly in 1985, so I didn't get an opportunity to know him. But what I found by researching the Internet this morning was something that I think speaks volumes to his time in politics generally, at the municipal level, the school board level and then the provincial level, and that is that he was a fellow who always understood where he came from. What was really remarkable in reading what I saw on the Internet today was that he was a type of guy who would walk out into the street and if somebody looked his way or somebody tried to get his attention, he always had the time to step over and say, "How can I help you? What can I do?"

I'm looking at Mrs. MacQuarrie, and I've got to say that those must have been pretty tough times, because sharing your husband, sharing your father, sharing your grandfather with the public is not an easy thing to do. We want to, on behalf of the constituents he represented at the municipal, school board and provincial levels, thank you for allowing us to borrow him for some time, allowing his attention sometimes to be diverted from the family and to serve the community.

What's really remarkable, as my colleague said a little bit earlier, is how quickly after he moved from PEI to Ontario that he got elected into municipal office. As practising politicians, we know that it's hard to get elected in a new community. Moving into Gloucester and some five years later being elected to municipal council



and staying there for all of those years in various capacities, serving as an alderman, a deputy reeve, a reeve, a school board trustee, a school board chair and eventually the member of provincial Parliament, says that this man got to know a lot of people in that community in that short period of five years, but what's more important, that people liked what they saw. I think that says something about the individual.

The other thing that I want to say, and it has to be said, is that he was three steps ahead of his time in a number of ways. One of the things that I can particularly relate to as a person who has had an opportunity to go to Gloucester a number of times, because my brother lives there, on Alboro Crescent, is the work that was done under his leadership and others to make sure that not only Gloucester but eventually the city of Ottawa became very green cities as far as green spaces. As you travel around the city of Ottawa from Gloucester and work your way out, it's pretty apparent that there was some planning that was done early on in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s to make sure that, as Ottawa expanded, we took the time in that community to say, "Let's not just build a whole bunch of residential complexes. Let's not just allow development to happen wherever it's going to go. Let's make sure to plan this in some way so that we can build a greener city, a city where we can enjoy being able to walk with our loved ones or go and enjoy nature within an urban setting. I think that says a lot about the man.

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The other thing I want to say is that my worst whuppings I ever got in badminton were at a particular recreational centre that I notice has been renamed—because I drove by and had an opportunity to go there with my brother not so long ago—and that's the renaming of the recreational complex. I want to tell you, that's a real neat facility, one that's utilized by the people—again, something that he was involved in.

I just say on behalf of all of us here in the Legislature, aside from all political stripes, New Democrats, Conservatives and Liberals say to you the family: We thank you for the time that you shared your husband with us, your father. We say to you, thank you. Gloucester, Ottawa and Ontario are better places today. You had an opportunity to bring him back and share him for some time after that in retirement. We know he will be missed, and we say thank you for sharing with us all those years.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I want to join with my colleagues from the Progressive Conservative Party and the New Democratic Party in paying tribute to Bob MacQuarrie in the Ontario Legislature today and in front of his family, who are assembled here in the Speaker's gallery.

I did serve with Bob MacQuarrie. He was here from 1981 to 1985. He was a person whom virtually everybody in the House liked very much and could speak to on a very informal basis. He was not a hardline partisan in any way, and I think that was appreciated by those who worked with him. He had certain responsibilities that

were assigned to him by Premier Davis in terms of being a parliamentary assistant—as they say in the federal House, a parliamentary secretary. He brought an expertise in the field of law which I think was very valuable to the portfolios he held and of course in the deliberations of this House.

But previous to his coming to the Ontario Legislature, where he was one of the most popular members, in my view, during that period of time, he was really a person before his time. If you read some of the things that he did as a municipal politician, you would say that that's exactly what people are doing today and making a big fuss about it, because in this particular case it looks like it's something new and different, but remember the context of the time. We're talking about before he came to the Ontario Legislature, and one of the things that was mentioned was using structured municipal planning to shape his municipality. When you have a township, what you used to often see in townships was, let's say, development that wasn't very organized. It simply seemed to be strip development here, there and everywhere else. One of the first townships he had responsibility for was to have a full-time planner and municipal engineer and to create a planning board and planning department. That's something that's standard procedure today. If you didn't have it, people would be shaking their heads in bewilderment. But he was the one who recognized early on that that's exactly what you have to do if you're going to have appropriate development, not development that is simply scattered all over and not very thoughtful.

It mentions that he was an early supporter of the benefits of the life/work concept, which promotes having workplaces close to homes so people can be less dependent on their cars. Well, where have you heard that lately, if you haven't heard it in the past year, about many people at various levels of government saying that this is exactly what we have to do? This is what Bob was promoting many, many years ago. We're talking about a couple of decades ago that he was promoting this, and today it's coming to fruition—but again, ahead of his time.

He created a system in Gloucester where citizens could actively participate in sharing their community's services long before citizen engagement was a standard of best public practice. Again, at one time there wasn't that much consultation with people in municipalities when there was planning going on for services and development. He was one who believed very strongly that that should be the case, and not only did he promote that as a municipal politician, but I know that when he was here in the House, he was a promoter of that practice as well.

He was an early adopter of public accessibility, recommending changes in the building code to ensure handicapped access to all public buildings. I think it was just last year that we passed a bill dealing with accessibility, and governments over the years have been moving in that direction. To his credit, he recognized the need and the entitlement that people who have had



various disabilities would have, but they had the right to have that kind of accessibility, and he was promoting it long before it was popular to do so.

He supported glass recycling in Gloucester, along with Pollution Probe. That was just the beginning of the time when people were talking about the idea of recycling.

Gloucester became one of the early adopters of regulations requiring smoke detectors in new homes, and was the first jurisdiction in North America to make smoke detectors compulsory in existing residential buildings. This again is something that we almost take for granted today. Bob MacQuarrie a couple of decades ago was promoting this and seeing that it was put into action.

We can find many statements in the public media by people paying tribute to Bob MacQuarrie and the role he played in his own municipality, but also the role he played in this Ontario Legislature.

I join my colleagues in the Legislature, on behalf of the Premier and members of the government caucus, in paying tribute to Bob MacQuarrie and thanking his family, as others have done, for sharing him with us for a period of time where he made a very significant contribution to this House. We no longer have him with us, but those of us who knew him will retain many fond memories of his personality, his friendship and his contribution to his province and to his own constituency.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I would convey our sympathies and condolences to the family and assure them that we will see to it that a copy of today's record is forwarded to them.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT AWARENESS WEEK

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I believe we have unanimous consent for all parties to speak for up to five minutes in recognition of Sexual Harassment Awareness Week.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Sandra Papatello (Minister of Economic Development and Trade, minister responsible for women's issues):** The McGuinty government is declaring the first week of June as Sexual Harassment Awareness Week. Many thanks to my colleague the member from Chatham-Kent Essex and women's organizations for bringing this need to our attention. A very particular, very special thanks to our member from Chatham-Kent Essex, who works diligently with my office on these matters.

The member from Chatham-Kent Essex has worked hard to see that the first week of June, proclaimed as Sexual Harassment Awareness Week, happens and that his advocacy in his community and in the province has not been in vain. The McGuinty government will not tolerate sexual harassment against women. By declaring Sexual Harassment Awareness Week, we're raising public awareness of harassment against women, reinforcing

public censure of sexual harassment and helping focus community prevention efforts. Our government wants to focus Ontario communities' attention on the serious issue of sexual harassment and honour the memories of Theresa Vince and Lori Dupont.

June 2 is the anniversary of the death of Theresa Vince, who was murdered by her workplace supervisor. Lori Dupont was killed by her colleague on November 12, 2005. These two tragedies make crystal clear the necessity for all of us to work together to end sexual harassment before it escalates into violence, whether domestic or at the workplace. Statistics show that 80% to 90% of Canadian girls and women will experience sexual harassment at some point in their lives.

Sexual harassment is still a pervasive problem in our society. The McGuinty government recognizes this and is determined to protect women.

No one should go to work each day terrified that a co-worker will harass them. That is no way to work and that is no way to live life, so the McGuinty government is addressing these problems. We're changing the rules. We're getting information to the women who need it and we're changing the attitudes of boys and girls. Our government is targeting public education programs to young people to teach them about healthy, equal relationships. Our new website, at [www.equalityrules.ca](http://www.equalityrules.ca), and our various programs aimed at youth ages eight to 14 help young children and youth understand the benefits of respectful relationships. We're also showing children where to get help if and when they need it.

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Neighbours, Friends and Families is another public education campaign geared to educate people on abuse. The campaign provides information to help individuals recognize the signs of abuse and know what action to take. Public service announcements, a website—[neighboursfriendsandfamilies.on.ca](http://neighboursfriendsandfamilies.on.ca)—brochures, a poster and wallet cards are available as part of the education campaign. So far, we have 76 communities participating in this campaign.

The McGuinty government is investing the dollars and resources to provide services to address violence against women. We're spending over \$190 million annually across ministries to help protect women so they can feel safe in their communities and in their own homes. We're spending more than \$82 million in new money for our four-year domestic violence action plan. This is an increase of 25% over what we announced in 2004.

The plan is addressing the issue of violence against women on all fronts. It's an integrated and comprehensive approach. We're providing better community-based supports, implementing public education and training strategies, strengthening Ontario's criminal and family justice systems and providing better access to French-language services. We've passed the halfway mark on this plan and we're seeing results, thanks in large part to our community partners.

I encourage my colleagues and communities across Ontario to get involved and help awareness. They can use



this week to learn more about sexual harassment and what can be done to prevent it by visiting the Ontario Women's Directorate web pages. By working together, we can create a better and safer future for women across the province. All women have the right to live free from the fear of violence.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott (Whitby–Ajax):** I'm happy to rise on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus to speak to this very important issue of sexual harassment and recognize this first week of June as a week devoted to spreading awareness of this issue to both women and men, to both family and co-workers.

As we know, sexual harassment can occur either at work or at home, at school or in a social situation, and it's perpetrated in such a way that can be overt, but it can also be subtle and complex, building over time through a series of repeated offences. In fact, it is reported that only 5% of sexual harassment occurrences are explicit and obvious.

Sexual harassment can include name-calling and telling sexual jokes and it can include pressuring another to perform sexual activity or the act of sexual assault itself. It can consist of staring or leering, standing too close or following and cornering another or using a position of authority to get away with offensive activities. It can include making stereotypes of one gender or another. It can be incentive-based, consisting of a promise made in exchange for sexual involvement. Amidst these various examples of acts of sexual harassment, one thing can be made clear: Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual or gender-related attention and is one-sided and unreciprocated.

These varied examples of the continuum that exists, however, demonstrate exactly why it is so important that we educate ourselves and our children about the realities of sexual harassment through awareness campaigns and other efforts so that we can ensure that Ontarians are equipped with the knowledge and the resources to protect themselves.

The reality is that anyone is vulnerable to sexual harassment. In fact, one in two women will report that she has been harassed in her workplace. Most shamefully, the highest populations at risk are aboriginal women, women from minority groups as well as the disabled. This is simply unacceptable. A society will be judged by how it treats its most vulnerable members and right now the judgment is, frankly, damning. We must dissolve cultural barriers with respect to this file and seriously address the language barriers that prevent some of those most at risk from accessing prevention strategies or support. It is our responsibility as legislators to make eradicating this type of behaviour a priority and pursue comprehensive efforts to achieve this end. It is imperative that governments and private companies, large organizations and community leaders take the lead and come together in a united front to prevent sexual harassment.

One of the reasons often cited for the continued prevalence of this type of behaviour is the lack of

enforceable and accountable reporting mechanisms for victims. Recently, the International Olympic Committee adopted a consensus statement on sexual harassment and abuse in sport, including a commitment to employing prevention strategies such as complaint and support mechanisms as well as education efforts, and has deemed that all sporting organizations should implement the same provisions. Public statements of intent such as this are examples of efforts that should be duplicated wherever possible because, as we know, the effects of sexual harassment are insidious and profound.

Like sexual abuse and assault, the effects of sexual harassment are not only physical but can manifest themselves in all areas of a victim's life. These effects are all interrelated and can include trouble sleeping, illness, substance dependence, depression, fear, hopelessness and degradation. Should the activity have occurred or be ongoing in the workplace, a victim may avoid the office as much as possible, which could lead to a loss of income, benefits or future career opportunities.

The fact is that stopping sexual harassment is the key to preventing sexual violence and assault, something we have talked about many times in this Legislature and we addressed last month in recognizing May as Sexual Assault Prevention Month. It is fitting that we now use this time to reflect on the strategies that can be pursued in this regard, and I would ask that all members join me in recognizing this week while remembering that there is always more to do.

Working together, we must ensure that this awareness campaign continues unofficially all across Ontario for as long as is necessary and send a message to those who perpetrate these offences that this type of behaviour will not be tolerated in Ontario.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I'm pleased and honoured to say a few words on behalf of New Democrats in regard to Sexual Harassment Awareness Week. I have to start by saying that I would be remiss if I didn't begin by acknowledging the excellent work being done in my own community at the Sexual Assault Centre Hamilton Area, SACHA, an organization that, on May 24—and some of our local members were there as well as I was—won a 2007 Award of Distinction from the YWCA. Like most sexual assault centres—I would say, every sexual assault centre in Ontario—they do great work, and Hamiltonians need their services very much. Without the people who work on the front lines in our community agencies across Ontario and without stable, annual and adequate funding to keep them there, women and their children become increasingly vulnerable.

Late in the day on Friday, we received the McGuinty government news release announcing Sexual Harassment Awareness Week. It was almost like an afterthought. Women's organizations and labour groups across Ontario had been hoping for far more from the government this year. Frankly, the announcement was very late in the eyes of all of those groups who work hard year-round to fight, particularly, workplace harassment in all its forms. They had wanted 2007 to be the year to galvanize around



the seriousness of sexual harassment and really raise its profile with tangible and lasting measures. They had hoped to see the government move to make Sexual Harassment Awareness Week a permanent fixture on the annual calendar. A Liberal private member's bill, as was already raised—Bill 110—called for this, and it easily could have been passed into law. I know that all parties in this Legislature would have agreed.

This weekend marked the anniversary of the death of Theresa Vince, who was murdered in a sexual harassment case. Eleven years later, despite lofty government promises, Ontario still has not fully implemented the recommendations of the coroner's inquest into the death of Theresa Vince. Most pointedly to the Minister of Labour, who unfortunately—I guess I shouldn't say that. To the Minister of Labour, the jury said this: "Make a priority of the ongoing study of inclusion of sexual harassment in the Occupational Health and Safety Act." It's right there: a very clear recommendation.

For years, the member from Chatham-Kent Essex has brought forward this issue. The Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre has been leading the way on the call for education, prevention and, most of all, action, with the support of that member.

As people rallied at a vigil in Theresa's memory on Friday, many questioned why Ontario still does not have a law regarding workplace harassment and sexual harassment. In fact, Saskatchewan recently made their progressive legislation even tougher. In Ontario, we don't even have a law. Bill 45, my private member's bill, attacks harassment head-on and picks up on the work that former MPP and now federal candidate in Beaches-East York Marilyn Churley did while she was here. But still no Ontario law in all of this time, and still not enough funding to secure the supports that victims of sexual harassment and sexual violence—male and female—require to feel safe from the abuse.

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Recently, it took my personal intervention to have the government funding for the 2007-08 year flow to the Woman Abuse Council of Toronto, and I appreciate that the funding did finally flow. That's the central coordinating agency of violence-against-women programs here in Toronto. It took me agitating the McGuinty government ministers to get the Woman Abuse Council's annual funding approved, within days of staff having to be laid off. It took my personal intervention just recently to secure over \$50,000 from the Ministry of the Attorney General to save the council's counselling programs as well—and again, I appreciate that that money flowed—but it shouldn't take an opposition member to have to remind the government of their responsibilities in this regard. Everything seems ad hoc and knee-jerk, not the permanent base funding arrangement that local community coordinating committees were told to expect.

This year, the McGuinty government is reducing the budget, notwithstanding what the minister said, of the Ontario Women's Directorate by 6%, and they're reducing the amount spent on violence-prevention initiatives

by a whopping 17.4%. The Ontario Women's Directorate is embarrassingly limited in its ability to provide service and appears to be relatively voiceless at the cabinet table.

On the weekend, activists from a growingly impatient women's community participated in a women's housing takeover. Why? Because the key issue for women fleeing violence is affordable housing and second-stage housing, and sustaining a decent income is a major issue. They're not seeing help materialize on any of these fronts from this government, even though they were led to believe that it would materialize. We need to listen to women and listen to groups like OAITH—really listen—and then follow their advice. If we truly want to end harassment and violence, that's what we need to do. This government has not yet done it; woe for the day when they finally will.

## VISITORS

**Hon. Caroline Di Cocco (Minister of Culture):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to introduce to the Legislature, in the members' gallery, Michael and Christopher Chopican. Christopher has won a national science fair award. They're from my riding. I want to welcome Christopher. He's up there.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier. January 25, 2002; March 29, 2002; October 2, 2002; May 9, 2003; September 11, 2003; September 19, 2003; November 1, 2003; November 20, 2003; November 21, 2003; December 17, 2003; January 14, 2004; April 15, 2004; and April 24, 2004—On every one of those dates, the Premier said that he was not going to raise taxes. He also, as we well know, looked voters in the eye during the course of the election campaign and said, "I won't raise your taxes, but I won't cut them either."

What happened? The people of Ontario know all too well. They got the biggest tax increase in the history of Ontario after all those promises. Yesterday, the Premier promised again that he won't raise taxes. How was yesterday's promise any different than the 13 dates I cited earlier on which you said you would not raise taxes?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** Ontarians remember where we were when it comes to the management of public finances. They remember that the Tories said that there was no deficit when they knew there was a \$5.5-billion deficit. Ontarians now also understand that when we passed our law to prevent any government at any time in the future from ever hiding a deficit, they voted against that law.

Ontarians also know how far we've come. They know we've balanced the budget twice. At the same time, we made investments in essential public services like our schools and our health care and supports for economic growth. I can assure you that Ontarians do not want to go back to those kinds of days. They want to keep moving forward with the Liberals.

**Mr. Tory:** The Premier has—and he knows it—a major, major credibility problem. He broke the signature—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** We know the rules. The rules are: One member asks a question and a minister responds. One person at a time. They're not difficult.

The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** The Premier broke the signature promise in his own election platform. He has been in office since October 23, 2003. He kept repeating the promise after he came to office; in fact, he repeated it over and over again seven times after he came into office. He did it as late as April 24, 2004. He did it after the Peters report. The next thing we're going to hear is that he's going to say that the devil made him do it.

Would the Premier please explain why we should believe him today when he has proven himself to be the champion promise breaker of all time in Canadian politics, maybe in the world? Why should we believe the Premier today when he has broken this promise, having repeated it over and over again to the people of Ontario? Why should anyone believe him?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Ontarians won't forget where we were. As I said a moment ago, they won't forget that they hit a \$5.5-billion deficit. They won't forget that we were left to clean up that mess. We made some very difficult decisions along the way. We made some dramatically needed and essential investments in health care. That has resulted in more doctors and more nurses and shorter wait times. We have about 100 hospital construction projects either completed, under way or about to begin in the province of Ontario.

People will also not forget the kind of consequences that will flow from the promise now made by the Tories to take at least \$2.5 billion from health care. They'll remember that the previous government said they could do that and somehow find efficiencies. Those efficiencies translated into closed hospitals, fired nurses and longer wait times. We're not going back there.

**The Speaker:** Final supplementary?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** No, we're not going to interject before the Leader of the Opposition even begins to speak, or even after that.

**Hon. Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** Shortly after that.

**The Speaker:** No, not after that, Minister of Finance, and you can consider yourself warned.

**Mr. Tory:** Maybe just once before we go, to have one of them go. It would be such a pleasure to see.

It's not just the health tax; it's the promise that was made over and over again, repeated over and over again. I've cited 13 dates, some after you received the report from Mr. Peters. Three days later, you promised it again. It's over and over again, and it's not just the health tax; it's the hydro rates, the cigarette taxes, the wine cooler tax, the beer tax, the elimination of all kinds of tax incentives. And then, of course, even this year there was the tax on diamonds after you crowed about the low diamond tax rates.

The people of Ontario simply cannot afford to believe the Premier again with his track record, and who could blame them? On this latest series of deathbed repentances, given the incredible history of making the promise not to raise taxes over and over again and then breaking it over and over again, why should anybody believe anything that the Premier has to say on this?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The Tories just never learn. They insist still that there was no deficit, notwithstanding the fact that the Auditor General found, proved and established beyond a shadow of a doubt that there was a \$5.5-billion deficit. We've passed the only law of its kind, to my knowledge, in North America which requires the Auditor General to make public the true state of public finances before the election. They voted against that.

Now the official opposition is determined once again to bring us back to those years. They're telling us that they can take at least \$2.5 billion from health care, but somehow they'll add still more money to health care and that it will not translate into cuts to hospitals and nurses and into increased wait times. We know as well that they intend to put money into private schools; we know that money is going to have to come out of public education.

We've seen all those kinds of stories before. The people of Ontario don't want to go back there; they want to keep moving forward. They want to keep moving forward with our government, and we look forward to moving with them.

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## WATER QUALITY

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier. The Premier would be aware that there are some very serious concerns with respect to the quality of drinking water that is coming through the taps of residences, businesses and institutions across the province. Specifically, the latest concerns relate to whether or not there are dangerous levels of lead in the water that is coming out of the tap.

The government has bungled this file from the beginning, from saying they didn't believe the tests and then moving on to it being confined to London, and then it was voluntary tests and now, finally, it is some compulsory tests, but unfortunately they are totally inadequate. Today, we hear, the minister has some recommendations that the government should do what we have been saying all along.



My question for the Premier is this: Why has the government dragged its feet in terms of trying to make sure these tests are done so people will know if the water is safe, and what are you doing about the recommendations that have been made today?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** Ontarians will not forget where we were when it came to the environment under the Conservative government. The environment hit a low point during their years. They fired water inspectors. They fired meat inspectors. The chief medical officer of the day said that the government of the day turned its back on public health. Walkerton happened on their watch, and the people of Ontario will not forget that. More than that, when we brought forward our Clean Water Act, the toughest of its kind in North America, that party voted against that legislation.

The people of Ontario do not want to go back to those kinds of days and that abdication of responsibility when it comes to protecting the environment. They want to keep moving forward.

**Mr. Tory:** When the Premier talks about abdication of responsibility, he is describing precisely what has gone on here in this very instance. In one of her answers to questions last week, the minister crowed about putting forward new guidelines from Health Canada that could help improve the standards for drinking water. She said she did that on April 26.

But a month later, when people were drinking this water—pregnant women and young children who are at risk—when mandatory testing was finally ordered by her, she blithely ignored the very same guidelines she was crowing about, the guidelines that she is being told by a panel to implement today, a long time later. Instead, they said, “Flush the water and everything will be okay.” That’s what the minister and her colleagues said. When somebody gets up in the middle of the night to get a glass of water, they don’t flush the taps for five minutes; they drink the water right out of the tap. Six weeks since this story broke, and the government did not do what any right-thinking person would do: adhere to the highest possible standard when it comes to drinking water.

My question is this: Why did the government drag its heels and withhold important information from the public about these tests and then do an inadequate job once they finally got started?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I’m very pleased to have a chance to provide the Leader of the Opposition with some critical and important information. The advice that we received today is from the Ontario Drinking Water Advisory Council, a council that we established. In a post-Walkerton era, the legacy left by the previous government, we put in place a regime that will help us as a government move quickly forward with the best advice that we can receive to ensure that Ontarians have clean, safe drinking water.

Today, six weeks after learning about the circumstances in London and six weeks after I asked this expert committee to provide us with advice, we have received important information that we will be taking a very close look at. By Wednesday of this week, we will have 36 communities that will have reported back and we will then have the information that we require to take the policy advice, with the factual information, to move forward aggressively to respond—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** It’s very nice that the minister is taking a very close look at these recommendations. What they recommended, very simply, is to: implement a drinking water corrosion control and lead reduction strategy, which we’ve been advocating for weeks; extend the monitoring systems to sample the homes at the tap, which we’ve been advocating for weeks; and extend all recommendations to schools and other buildings, including this one, for that matter. Yet the minister stands in her place today and says she’s going to carry on with the small sample sizes, with this ridiculous notion that people run the tap for five minutes before they brush their teeth or take a drink of water.

Why doesn’t the minister stand in her place and do what she should have done weeks ago: have proper testing of the water, a proper sample size and do it the proper way, which is to turn the tap right on and take the water right out of the tap, as recommended by these people? Why can’t the minister just stand in her place and do what she should do right now if she’s going to do her job of protecting the safety of the water and the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** The advice that we received today from this expert panel is part of our government’s three-pronged attack on this very serious and important issue that we learned of some six weeks ago: to provide and seek advice from the federal government and encourage the federal government to move forward more aggressively with their corrosion control; to abide by and adhere to the chief drinking water inspector’s order that he issued some weeks ago to receive the information that we need so that we can have an understanding of the breadth of this issue.

The members opposite would like to put forward in this House that they are the experts we should adhere to. The experts that we stand by are those from Sierra Legal Defence Fund, the expert panel that we have retained—those drinking water experts known North America-wide—to help us get to the bottom of these critical issues. I can tell you, we will do absolutely that.

#### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. Ontario’s working families want a government that puts their day-to-day struggles first. Working families have been hit with a major job crisis. Across Ontario, plants, mills, factories are closing

almost on a daily basis, but the McGuinty government has decided that you don't care about this jobs crisis. In fact, the McGuinty government is going to shut down the Legislature almost a month early so that the Premier can go out and hit the barbecue circuit.

My question is this: How does the Premier justify his early and lengthy summer vacation when thousands of Ontario working families are being put out of their jobs?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I want to thank the leader of the NDP for this particular question because it gives me the opportunity to strike a dramatic contrast.

On our watch, during the last three and a half, close to four years now, we have generated 320,000 net new jobs. On their watch, during the course of five years overall—full count at the end of the day—they lost a total of 74,000 net new jobs. They were so concerned about putting in place the kinds of programs that would support those unemployed workers that, do you know how many days they sat during their last six months? Do you know how many bills they introduced during their last six months? Zero. They didn't sit once. They didn't introduce a single bill. I'll put our record up against their record when it comes to supporting the unemployed and supporting the economy of Ontario any day.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** If the Premier thinks that comparing himself to his new-found friend Bob Rae is going to help him, good luck to him.

People today—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Hampton:** A few McJobs and temporary jobs do not make up for the thousands of good-paying jobs that are being lost. If people look at today's news, they see two Ontarios. In one, 175,000 good-paying manufacturing jobs have been destroyed. Just this morning, 120 workers at a mill in Longlac were told they're gone. But in the other Ontario, McGuinty government MPPs are going to take a month-early vacation and take their 31% pay increase with them.

I say again, Premier: Can you explain to the 175,000 working families who have lost good-paying jobs how you justify taking the 31% pay increase and then leaving a month early?

1510

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I've already reminded the leader of the NDP that from December 1994 until the election of June 1995, the House didn't sit a single day. Not one single bill was introduced. I don't recall the leader of the NDP putting up much of a fuss at that time about the absence of parliamentary activity.

The leader of the NDP represents a party which collectively is a great pretender. They tell us that they

stand for progress for Ontario families. When it comes to the kinds of initiatives that we've put in place here, whether it's the child benefit act to help 1.3 million children growing up in poverty, whether it's lowering auto insurance rates over and over again, which is a basic pocketbook issue for Ontario families, whether it's ending the 60-hour workweek for Ontario workers, whether it's ending mandatory retirement, in each and every one of those instances that leader and that party have refused to stand up for Ontario families.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. The Minister of Health will come to order. The Minister of Health Promotion will come to order.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** The Premier calls it a benefit for children when his government has clawed back the national child benefit from the lowest-income kids in the province for four years and would plan to continue to claw it back for another five years.

Premier, it's about good jobs. People want a government that is prepared to stand up and fight to sustain good jobs in this province. What they've got is a Premier who votes himself a \$40,000 pay raise and then gives himself an extra month of summer vacation. The McGuinty government has a new motto: "Take the money and run."

There's important work to be done here. Thousands of people have lost their jobs. Thousands more are at risk of losing their jobs. If you really want to do something for working families, agree to debate and vote on my jobs protection commissioner bill today so we really can take some steps. Will you do that, or are you simply going to take the money and run?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The great pretender is at it again. He's pretending that he stands up for progress for Ontario families. Let me give you a couple of specific examples. When I went out to Thunder Bay and visited the Bombardier plant, one of the things the workers there asked me to do is the same thing they asked me to do when I met them at the CAW convention. They asked me to stand up and ensure that we continue to move ahead with that subway project to York so that we can keep those jobs growing there.

The other thing that I've heard time and time again from CAW members in particular is that they are so pleased and so proud of the fact that we are the most aggressive government in all of North America when it comes to standing up for our auto sector. We're now the number one auto producer in North America. We've landed 7,000 direct jobs, thousands of indirect jobs, because we're prepared to stand with workers rather than just stand up and pretend that you're with them.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** To the Premier: The only thing that people at the Bombardier plant in Thunder Bay want to know is, what hap-



pened to the legislation which ensured they would be the factory of choice for rapid transit equipment in Ontario? What happened is that the McGuinty government got rid of that. Premier, Ontario families want a government that will stand up for them. Instead, they have a Premier who wants to take the money and run.

Premier, you used to have a climate change plan. You said it was to close the coal plants by 2007. Well, it's 2007 and we know that that plan has gone up in smoke. But you've been promising another climate change plan, except you're afraid to present it, debate it and discuss it here in the Legislature. What's more important—taking the pay hike and running or actually dealing with climate change here in the Legislature?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm not sure how climate change is connected with the previous questions. Nonetheless, we've done a lot of really good work when it comes to climate change.

I'm proud of the fact that Al Gore said that there are only two places in the world that are at the forefront in terms of creating a welcoming environment for renewable energy to be produced by the private sector, and those are Germany and Ontario.

We have gone from approximately 10 wind turbines to close to 700 that are now built or under construction. We also have under way the largest solar farm in all of North America. The leader of the NDP will know that's the result of this new, aggressive, entrepreneurial standard offer program that we put in place that makes us the most welcoming jurisdiction in all of North America when it comes to putting in place new renewables. I think that speaks in a very strong way to our commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

**Mr. Hampton:** It's quite something, the McGuinty government that has a \$40-billion nuclear plan—to call that renewable energy. Because that's your real energy plan.

I want to contrast something. When the Premier wanted his \$40,000 pay hike, he ordered a special extended session of the Legislature to force it through. We've already had one broken climate change promise, and for the last six months the Premier has been promising another climate change plan. But what do we see here today? The Premier doesn't want to present his climate change plan; he doesn't want it debated and discussed in front of the people of Ontario. No. The Premier wants to cut and run, take his pay hike and his month-long extra vacation, and to heck with climate change.

Premier, if you really care about climate change, will you debate for third reading—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked. Premier.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** We understand where the NDP are coming from when it comes to climate change. They've got one climate change plan for the north and a different one for the south. Coal plants are apparently okay in the north, but they sing a different song in the south.

Even Jack Gibbons, chair of the Ontario Clean Air Alliance, disagrees with Mr. Hampton's flip-flopping that the province also can't afford to stop closing one coal-fired plant.

I am proud to say that we've reduced emissions from our coal-fired plants by one third so far; I compare that with the previous government, which increased emissions from coal-fired plants by 127%.

We'll also shut down those coal-fired plant emissions by another full third by 2011. They'll be shut down entirely by 2014—and that includes all our coal-fired plants.

We have just the one message for all the people of Ontario when it comes to coal-fired generation, unlike the leader of the NDP, who has one for the north and one for the south.

**Mr. Hampton:** This is the Premier who said, "Come hell or high water, all the coal plants will be closed by 2007." This is the Premier who used to go across Ontario sermonizing to people, "All the coal plants will be closed by 2007." Then he said, "Oh, they'll be closed by 2009." Then he said it would be by 2011; then maybe by 2014. Because he might be planning a solar farm, he says, "That's a climate change plan."

The only thing we know for sure from this government is that it plans to go nuclear and go big—\$40 billion big.

I say again, Premier: If you really care about climate change, why aren't we debating and discussing your promised climate change plan here today, instead of you shutting down the Legislature, taking your pay cut and running?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Every time I hear the leader of the NDP talk about his discomfort with the pay hike, I see all the other members of his caucus squirm. I look forward to seeing as a particular specific provision in their platform their renunciation, their denunciation, of that pay hike, to demonstrate their abiding conviction and their firm commitment and their decrying of that particular pay increase.

I can say that we look forward to moving ahead with our climate change plan. We've had a number of steps that we've put out, and we look forward, in the not-too-distant future, to putting out still more steps that will speak to our shared responsibility as global citizens when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions here in Ontario.

## WATER QUALITY

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is again for the Premier, and it concerns the water again. Last week, we had a scare here at Queen's Park in that we were told there were unsafe levels of lead in the water in this building. We're told that secondary tests have revealed that the water is okay but that there are precautions that remain in place.

The testing of the water being done right now in municipalities across the province is testing the water in

single-family homes only. So despite the government's claim that everything is okay if the water is run for five minutes, we see from Mr. James Wallace that that kind of five-minute flushing doesn't work in apartment buildings at all because there's too much stagnant water running through the system.

1520

Given that the lead can be leaching into water along the way from the source to the tap and the flushing doesn't work in apartment buildings, why hasn't the government included apartment buildings in this testing regime and, for that matter, why hasn't the minister just got up in her place today, or why hasn't the Premier, and simply accepted the recommendations of this panel that says it should be done the way we've been advocating for weeks now? Why haven't you done that?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I will try again to assist the Leader of the Opposition to understand the steps that have been taken since we first understood the circumstance in London just over six weeks ago.

At that time, the chief drinking water inspector immediately became engaged. We provided drinking water inspectors to assist the city of London. We hired North American experts, and we brought those experts to the table to work with the drinking water advisory council that we established as part of ensuring that we have source-to-tap protection here in the province.

We took the federal government document on corrosion control, posted it on our Environmental Bill of Rights and asked for a very quick turnaround time from our experts to understand and to move forward. I've been working with the federal government to push that initiative forward. By Wednesday of this week we will have all of the information that the chief drinking water inspector believes he and our advisory council need to have in order for us to take the policy information that has come from the experts, blend it with the scientific analysis that we have by Wednesday of this week and move forward with continued action.

**Mr. Tory:** In fact, what the minister did was have an official write a secret letter that said that people should do voluntary testing. Then they finally got around to saying that the testing should be mandatory, but when they did that, they took a tiny sample, much smaller than recommended in terms of the number of homes in each municipality, and they told people to run the taps for five minutes first, which no one on earth does before they have a glass of water or brush their teeth.

We also know that the testing regime that the minister talked about in such a self-congratulatory tone does not include apartment buildings, so those people are left out entirely. I don't know if they think that no pregnant women or young children live in apartment buildings. There are no schools included, no hospitals included, no

public buildings like this. Children are found to be the most seriously at risk, as well as pregnant women.

My question again is this: Will the Premier explain why the apartments are excluded, why the schools and other public buildings across the province are excluded and why they haven't simply done the kind of testing regime that anybody would think was sensible in a proper number of homes without running the taps for five minutes? Why not?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** Again, I will suggest to the member opposite that he look at the history and the legacy that his party left in respect to drinking water in this province, something that we have been fixing for the last four years. Although my friend opposite has recently become an advocate with respect to clean, safe water, frankly, we have a history in this province where Justice O'Connor and the Walkerton inquiry pointed specifically to the cuts and the legacies left behind by the former Conservative government.

We believe in taking our advice from those who are true experts in this province. The chief drinking water inspector has ordered 36 communities to undertake a testing regime so that we can have the comparable information that our experts need in order to analyze the circumstance in this province to give us the best advice that we can have to move forward expeditiously, as we have throughout this entire circumstance.

#### MINISTRY OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION GRANTS

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** My question is to the Premier. Tomorrow, the committee on estimates is scheduled to hear testimony from the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. For months, your minister has argued in this place that he would appear before the committee and answer questions about his slush fund. Can the Premier confirm that the minister will keep his promise and appear before the committee, or does the Premier plan to abandon his commitment to this House by having the House prorogue?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I already attended the committee last week, and I will continue to attend as per the schedule.

**Mr. Prue:** My question is back to the Premier. Yes, the minister attended for half an hour, and not one single question was allowed to be asked. So my question, back to the Premier: It sounds like the Premier would rather take his money and run. The minister was scheduled to appear last week, but thanks to unprecedented stalling tactics by Liberal MPPs, the questions never got asked. Now we hear that the government plans to shut down the House tonight or tomorrow morning just to avoid the hearings. I ask the Premier again. Will he tell us: Is he going to provide the transparency he repeatedly prom-



ised, or is he going to shut down democracy, hide his own government's shame and start his vacation?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** Again, I attended the committee last week and we went through the procedures as laid out. I gave my presentation and I will proceed to follow the committee's schedule as prescribed. At the same time, we're also undergoing the review by the Auditor General. We are proceeding in that fashion.

## HEALTH CARE SOINS DE SANTÉ

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell):** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, the wait times website was implemented in 2004, and according to the latest update, the Queensway Carleton Hospital of Ottawa, the Ottawa Hospital and l'Hôpital Montfort are showing lower wait times for cancer surgery.

Wait times have been a hot topic in the media and also right here in the Legislature, but I think we need to go beyond the numbers and look at the people who are being treated. We need to start asking ourselves how we can help the patients as they battle cancer. We all know it is a terrible disease which can leave people both physically and mentally drained.

Minister, cancer patients are more than just numbers. How are you addressing the need to put patients at the centre of the health care system?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I had the privilege of being at the General site of the Ottawa Hospital on Friday, accompanied by Minister Watson, for the opening of the Champlain Regional Cancer Diagnostic Assessment Centre.

With the generous support from the Ottawa community, the Agis family, MDS Nordion and Sanofi Pasteur, we have created a cancer hub which focuses on the patient by bringing together all of the diagnostic tests, and sufficiently compressing the time that it takes, to create a one-stop shopping model that dramatically reduces the time that patients who may have a cancer diagnosis require to actually be scheduled for subsequent treatment. It's a tremendously powerful example of innovation in the public health care system, that same kind of innovation that is put at risk by the plans of the Conservative Party to cut \$2.5 billion from health care and open the floodgates to further privatization. In their health care system, unlike ours, the focus will be on the almighty dollar instead of the patient.

1530

**M. Lalonde:** Ma question supplémentaire est au sujet des services en français dans nos hôpitaux d'Ottawa. Il est souvent difficile pour les francophones d'accéder aux soins de santé en français. Je me souviens très bien que le gouvernement précédent a tenté, sans succès, de fermer l'Hôpital Montfort, ce qui aurait été désastreux pour les

francophones de la région d'Ottawa et aussi pour les francophones du nord de l'Ontario.

Plusieurs de mes commettants sont francophones et, en tant que tels, ils ont le droit d'être servis dans leur langue maternelle. Peut-on s'assurer que vous allez continuer à protéger leur droit?

**L'hon. M. Smitherman:** Je voudrais remercier le député distingué pour sa question. Notre gouvernement a eu plusieurs résultats positifs pour les citoyens francophones de la région d'Ottawa, incluant un financement de plus de 185 \$ millions pour la construction de l'Hôpital Montfort.

Dans le futur, notre gouvernement s'engage à affirmer que les citoyens de la région d'Ottawa auront des services de santé en français.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. New question.

## ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** Now we know what the Minister of Health has been doing when he hasn't been paying attention to the health care system.

I have a question for the Premier. Last week, climatologists were predicting a hot and dry summer for Ontario. We know that predictions aren't always accurate, but I think we have to work on the assumption that they are going to be accurate. What guarantee can you give to the people in businesses of the province of Ontario that the hydro grid and supply are up to the job of meeting the needs of our citizens this summer?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I know my colleague will recognize that we have come a long way during the past three and a half years. Under the previous government, they allowed us to lose, effectively, the equivalent of Niagara Falls when it came to generation. We brought 3,000 megawatts more online. We've got 10,000 more in the works. We have expanded capacity at Niagara Falls. We've got all this new renewable energy coming online. We've also made some very substantial and significant investments in new transmission.

You will recall as well the real challenge we had in our first summer, trying desperately to make up for all those lost years under the previous government, when they failed to invest in generation and, in particular, failed to put in place a long-term plan. We now have in place a 20-year long-term plan to bring online clean, reliable electricity, which brings much more predictability, stability and confidence to our private sector.

**Mr. Runciman:** That was the political dance, rather than an answer to my question. I asked about a guarantee that can give comfort to the people and businesses in this province for this coming summer.

We know the Premier made extravagant promises with respect to the closure of coal plants, against the advice of an all-party committee of this Legislature. He then used



the argument that he had advice from the best experts available with respect to that, but then refused to indicate publicly the name of even one of those so-called best experts.

So again, I ask him: What kind of assurance, what kind of guarantee can he give the people and the businesses in this province that they won't be faced with problems with the grid and with the energy supply this coming summer?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** My colleague is looking for the name of an expert body. The IESO, the Independent Electricity System Operator, has now said that we have enough electricity supply for the summer. I gather that they're taking into consideration the 3,000 new megawatts of generation that we brought online.

This gives me an opportunity to speak to our shared responsibility as Ontarians, not just members of this House but all of us in this province, to conserve wherever we can. There's a new advertising program in place right now. We're honoured that Dr. David Suzuki is appearing in those ads as our spokesperson. There are all kinds of simple things we can do, whether it's drawing the shades, turning up the air conditioner so it doesn't come on so quickly or hanging out the clothes to dry. All those kinds of things are simple things we can do in our daily lives to ensure that we both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make sure we have reliability when it comes to electricity supply.

#### DISCLOSURE OF TOXINS AND POLLUTANTS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** You may know that there have been two toxic fires in as many weeks in southern Ontario. The night before last, in fact, citizens of Hamilton were very concerned as flames consumed a local computer parts recycler. Oh, I'm sorry, the question is to the Premier; I apologize.

Ontarians should have had the right to know what chemicals, toxins and health risks they may have been exposed to in their communities. They could have known that if we had had the chance to actually debate a bill that my colleague is bringing forward. But instead, the House is rising three weeks early.

So can the Premier explain why, when the House has so much unfinished business to undertake, such as passing the community-right-to-know legislation, we are rising three weeks early for vacation?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten (Minister of the Environment):** I had a chance to speak to my friend opposite, who represents the community in Hamilton that this weekend had the unfortunate circumstances of having a fire in a recycling services facility at 250 Lottridge Street. I can tell you that we had the ability at the Ministry of the Environment to respond very quickly, to have our trace atmospheric gas analyzer, known as

TAGA, state-of-the-art equipment, dispatched into that community in the early morning. They took air samples, and our air sampling confirmed that air contaminants from the fire were well below ministry guidelines and standards. It's the responsibility of the Ministry of the Environment to respond quickly. We did that. In so doing, we assured that the community in Hamilton was safe despite this difficult circumstance.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto-Danforth):** Contrary to the statements made by the Minister of the Environment last week that labelling was a federal jurisdiction, environmental law experts say that Ontario has the authority to put warnings on labels for products that have carcinogenic compounds in them. Shuffling a letter to the federal government asking them to protect Ontarians from toxic chemicals is simply inadequate.

Can the Premier please explain why this House is going on vacation three weeks early when the Premier should be bringing forward Bill 164 so that Ontarians will be protected from toxic chemicals?

**Hon. Ms. Broten:** I am so very proud to be part of a government that has taken such extensive action to ensure that we updated the standards to 40 new air pollutants. We've moved aggressively. I've been working with the federal government to ensure that they undertake labelling.

I do want to speak in this House about the fact that the member of the third party continues to indicate that we do not continue to undertake our roles as servants of our community when we don't sit in this House. I can tell you I am very privileged to actively support the community of Etobicoke-Lakeshore. I look forward to having a chance to get into my community, to help with casework, to be in my constituency office and to continue to serve the great people of the riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore.

#### ÉDUCATION

#### EDUCATION

**M. Phil McNeely (Ottawa-Orléans):** Ma question est pour la ministre de l'Éducation. Madame la Ministre, le gouvernement McGuinty a eu encore une bonne année car plusieurs accomplissements en éducation ont été atteints pour les étudiants de notre province. Nous avons réduit le nombre d'élèves dans les classes primaires, le taux d'obtention de diplômes secondaires a augmenté, et il y a un meilleur rendement scolaire pour tous les étudiants, tout en maintenant la paix et la stabilité. Nous avons développé des programmes et initiatives qui aideront les étudiants à atteindre leurs buts et atteindre notre objectif.

Lorsque notre gouvernement a pris le pouvoir, plusieurs classes primaires débordaient d'étudiants et les enseignants et enseignantes étaient débordés de travail. J'étais heureux de parler aujourd'hui de la réduction du nombre d'élèves dans les classes primaires à l'école



l'Étoile-de-l'Est, dans ma circonscription d'Ottawa-Orléans, et cette information était bien accueillie par mes commettants.

Madame la Ministre, pouvez-vous s'il vous plaît dire à cette Assemblée, ainsi qu'à mes commettants, comment la réduction de la taille des classes à 20 élèves va profiter à nos jeunes?

1540

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** It was a pleasure this morning to have visited the fine école de l'Étoile-de-l'Est in Orléans. It was a great pleasure. I saw there the fruits of the investments we've made in lowering primary class sizes. We know that young students, those little children who come into our schools who receive more individual attention in reading, writing and math, will do better later on. We know that teachers can access them, can give them more support. When we came into office, less than one third, 31%, in 2003-04 of our primary classes were at 20 students or fewer. Now nearly two thirds, 65%, of classes have 20 students or fewer this year compared to then. This reduction in class sizes has been possible because we put 4,800 new teachers into the system to allow that to happen.

I want to thank all the parents, all the teachers, all of the administrators who have made this initiative such a success for our youngest students.

**Mr. McNeely:** While the members opposite dismiss our achievements, others recognize where we were with respect to publicly funded education to where we are now. In fact, Lou Rocha, executive director of the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario, has said, "There is much for which to be thankful. Student achievement has improved. Teacher morale has improved, and thousands of young teachers are able and willing to take up the profession each year. For all that it has done, this government deserves another mandate."

*Interjections.*

**Mr. McNeely:** I believe the members opposite need a reminder of all the exciting things we're doing in publicly funded education as they continue to be johnny-come-latelies in their policies and positions. Minister, how have we improved publicly funded education since we've taken office?

**Hon. Ms. Wynne:** Let's start with the \$3.5-billion investment in publicly funded education since 2003. That's more invested than the previous government's two terms in office. There are more high school students graduating from secondary school. There are more students with higher test scores in our elementary and secondary schools. There are smaller class sizes, as I have just said.

We have changed the funding formula every year in our budget by putting more money in and changing the grant structure. There have been zero days lost to teachers' strikes. There were 26 million days lost under the Tories. But if there's one thing that we've done that I think is the most significant, it's epitomized by the teacher this morning at the école de l'Étoile who pulled

me aside and said he is grateful to us because he feels good about being a teacher. He feels respected. He feels like he's part of a government that understands what an institution like our publicly funded education is for.

## JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** My question is for the Premier. Residents of my riding and all of York region are fed up with the incompetence of this government's administration of justice in our courts. Your refusal to appoint the necessary justices of the peace has meant the cancellation of court proceedings, with cases being thrown out and time and money wasted. On May 15 in Newmarket, two afternoon courts were cancelled, 53 charges with officers cancelled. On May 18 in Richmond Hill, one court was closed, wasting the time of 17 officers coming for 130 charges, including two motor vehicle collision charges. Why has your government refused to give York region enough JPs to hear cases in our courts? You have been in charge of the government for four years. Why can't you get it right?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Attorney General.

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** This government has appointed more justices of the peace than any government in the history of Ontario. That's good news for the people of Ontario and that's good news for York region.

I had a conversation with the chief of police. I also had a conversation with political leadership. I presume that you're aware of the fact that there have been a number of appointments made—and a number of very high-quality appointments made, I might add. I'd be happy to talk about those in my supplementary.

I think it's very important that the public understand that there is a new process in place. It is a fantastic process. It's a process that the Chief Justice for the Ontario Court of Justice said is the most significant change to the justice of the peace bench since 1370. That's pretty good—older than sliced bread.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** Yes, absolutely. We have a new process, we have more JPs, and we have more good news to come in the supplementary.

**Mrs. Munro:** These examples I have outlined come from Chief Armand La Barge of York Regional Police, sent to all York-region MPPs. The silence from the Liberal MPPs is deafening. The new JPs you have appointed do not replace those retiring. We're talking about a net number, not the number you have announced. Each JP requires months of training. York region will continue to be in crisis in our courts because of your incompetence. The time of police officers, witnesses and court officials will continue to be wasted. The threat of charges being thrown out will continue. It is clear that this government is obviously indifferent to the police, courts and people of York region. Why have you refused to do your job of providing the administration of justice, and

why do you continue to shortchange the people of York region?

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** I would hope that the member does not disapprove of the fact that last week we made three more justice of the peace appointments to Newmarket—three more appointments; 87 appointments in total: a former RCMP officer, a chaplain, a former principal, a former NATO official who speaks four languages, a journalist, a former mayor, a former principal of Ottawa's Italian-language school, a rear admiral and 39-year veteran of Canadian Armed Forces Naval Reserve.

We've appointed more JPs than any other government in the history of Ontario. We've brought quality appointments to the province of Ontario through the new Justices of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee, a level of transparency and independence that the province has not seen before and a level of administrative justice, as well, with the new per diem JPs, who can be brought in to deal with case flow issues, who allow flexibility within the system like never before. That is nothing but good news for the administration of justice in the province of Ontario. I thank the member for her question.

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South–Weston):** My question is to the Minister of Housing. I ask it on behalf of the more than 160,000 Torontonians who live in Toronto Community Housing. A number of them are here with us this afternoon. Unlike government members, they can't just pack up and leave for the Muskoka cottage later this week. The only homes they have are crumbling and in need of more than—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. I need to be able to hear the member for York South–Weston place his question.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The chief government whip.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

Member for York South–Weston.

**Mr. Ferreira:** Thank you, Speaker. I understand I'm having some visits tomorrow.

The only homes these tenants have are crumbling and in urgent need of \$300 million of essential capital repairs, yet this government refuses to act. Its members duck meetings with tenant leaders. Its commitment to repair existing affordable housing is grossly inadequate. As each day passes, the situation gets worse.

My question to the minister is a simple one: When will his government assume its responsibility to fund the repairs at Toronto Community Housing?

**Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** I'd like to thank the member for the question, because it allows me once again to talk about the investments that this government has made

with respect to housing in the province of Ontario over the last couple of years.

We promised to deliver 15,000 new housing units for affordable housing, and we're doing that. The funding has been allocated, the projects have been built and they're being occupied as we speak.

In the last budget, we allocated over 27,000 housing allowance units for the province of Ontario, and 35,000 families are going to benefit from the new housing allowance program that has just been recently announced—including all the rent supplement programs that are already in existence and that we've added to over the last four years.

1550

In this current budget, we also allocated \$127 million to our municipal partners out there for housing projects, which they can decide how to utilize. If they determine that they want to use it in order to rebuild or renovate existing housing, they can do that.

They should be speaking to the local Toronto housing—

**The Speaker:** Supplementary.

**Mr. Ferreira:** This government is obviously more interested in summer barbecue photo ops than it is in the health and well-being of more than 160,000 Ontarians.

The minister knows the problem at Toronto Community Housing very well. Here's what he said in this House in November 2005: "There's no question about the fact that something has to be done about upgrading the social housing that currently exists out there."

This minister's parliamentary assistant described the problem as "a ticking time bomb."

Well, talk is cheap. Toronto Community Housing tenants are sick and tired of talk. They demand action. That's why they're here today.

Why won't this minister commit to paying for the housing repairs before his Liberal government closes the Legislature early for summer vacation?

**Hon. Mr. Gerretsen:** As I've already indicated, the \$127 million, including about \$27 million to the city of Toronto, was delivered by the end of March in order for the cities to determine as to how that money can best be allocated. In some cases, it should go into new housing; in some cases, it should go to the repair of housing. We have left it up to our housing service managers to determine how the money can best be used.

I realize there's always more that can be done, but over the last two years this government has done more in housing than any other government over the last 12 years.

We're proud of our record. There's more to be done. We've made a darned good start, and certainly the kind of investments that we've made can only help those individuals who live in those housing units.

#### PROPERTY TAXATION

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce):** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, I know that my



constituents were very pleased with the announcement in the 2007 budget that dealt with increasing the fairness and the predictability of property taxes.

Minister, as you are aware from your visits to my riding of Huron–Bruce, there are many properties that span its vast lakeshore, and these properties have seen an increase in market value over recent years. Can you please explain further to my constituents how your plan to increase the fairness and predictability of assessments will help those lakeshore property owners in my riding who are experiencing increasing current market value on their properties?

**Hon. Greg Sorbara (Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet):** I'm delighted with the question because I think the changes, the improvements, the reforms that we've put in place on property tax assessment were really one of the strongest parts of the budget.

Some people had been advocating a 5% cap system. It's interesting, because that just shifts the tax burden from one set of properties to properties that are not increasing in value that rapidly, and that would have been an unfair shift.

What we've done is put in place a new cycle so that properties are assessed only every four years, and if there's an increase in value, that value will be graduated in over the course of the four years.

We've also put in place a much stronger appeal system, so we're in a situation where we've got a system that is both transparent and fair to taxpayers right across the province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Supplementary. The member for Guelph–Wellington.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington):** Minister, it is good to hear that you are working to provide fairness for homeowners when it comes to their property taxes, but I have a special case in my riding.

As you may have read in the Guelph Mercury, a local property owner who has built a windmill on his property is threatening to take it down because of a high assessment which would lead to a large increase in his property tax. Obviously, his intent was to save money by generating his own electricity, not to pay higher property taxes. I know that this current assessment is on hold as MPAC is looking into this.

However, I have tabled a motion in this Legislature that seeks to reinforce the government's commitment to supporting Ontarians who invest in green energy. In fact, the motion specifically reads, in part at least, that we should "revise assessment policies to ensure property tax does not act as a disincentive to the development of residential wind turbines, solar energy systems and other home green energy generation."

Minister, will you support my motion and ensure that green investments are encouraged when properties are assessed in the future?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** The answer is simple and straightforward. I know about my colleague's commitment to green energy. Her motion is a very strong one.

I just want to answer the question, if I could, on the assessment of pieces of property where new facilities like windmills are put into place. I've asked the folks in my own shop and at MPAC to revisit this because we want to do everything we can as we're developing new green energy initiatives, whether it's solar or wind power, to make sure that the property tax assessment system does not disadvantage those who want to take those steps. They're taking steps that are going to help everyone in the province.

## PETITIONS

### DOCTOR SHORTAGE

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I have a petition to do with the doctor shortage, signed by many people from the Gravenhurst area. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we, the undersigned, are very concerned about the doctor shortage in Muskoka;

"Whereas, without increased funding for the Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare Centre, the administration will not be able to keep it as a full-service hospital;

"Whereas, without a full-service hospital in our area, we will be unable to attract doctors; and

"Whereas Muskoka has a higher-than-average percentage of 'senior' citizens; it is of great concern that we attract more doctors."

I support this petition.

### NON-PROFIT HOUSING

**Mr. Paul Ferreira (York South–Weston):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas every citizen of Ontario should have a safe, decent and healthy home; and

"Whereas thousands of individuals and families are denied this basic right when the province of Ontario downloaded affordable housing to the city of Toronto but refused to pay for the hundreds of millions of dollars in deferred capital repairs; and

"Whereas poor living conditions undermine the safety and security of communities, harming children, youth and families living in affordable homes; and

"Whereas failure to invest in good repair undermines the values of the province's affordable housing as the condition of the housing stock deteriorates; and

"Whereas poor living conditions have a damaging impact on the health of communities, costing Ontarians millions in health costs; and

"Whereas investment in housing pays off in better residences and in stronger, safer, healthier communities; and

"Whereas residents of Toronto Community Housing have waited five years for the province to pay its bills and bring affordable housing to a state of good repair;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"Accept its responsibility and invest \$300 million to ensure that all residents of Toronto Community Housing have a safe, decent and healthy home."

I agree with the petition and I hand it to page Jacqueline.

#### LAKEVIEW GENERATING STATION

**Mr. Tim Peterson (Mississauga South):** I have a petition on behalf of the Lakeview residents.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas there should be no decisions on the future development of the Lakeview generating station grounds until:

"A full, independent environmental assessment, including air, water, soil samples and a health study of long-term residents, is completed to determine the historical, current and accumulative impact of industrial pollutants on the existing environment of Lakeview, southeast Mississauga, and its citizens; and

"Government includes this Lakeview assessment and gives its findings equal weight in all mandatory environmental reports regarding future development of the Lakeview generating grounds."

I am pleased to present this petition and add my name to it and have it delivered—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for Kitchener Centre.

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Well, thank you for your advice. The member for Kitchener Centre.

#### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Mr. John Milloy (Kitchener Centre):** "Petition to the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the legacy of Pope John Paul II reflects his lifelong commitment to international understanding, peace and the defence of equality and human rights;

"Whereas his legacy has an all-embracing meaning that is particularly relevant to Canada's multi-faith and multicultural traditions;

"Whereas, as one of the great spiritual leaders of contemporary times, Pope John Paul II visited Ontario during his pontificate of more than 25 years and, on his visits, was enthusiastically greeted by Ontario's diverse religious and cultural communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to grant speedy passage into law of the private member's bill by Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees entitled An Act to proclaim Pope John Paul II Day."

I would like to add that I'm in support of Mr. Klees's bill.

1600

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Now for what each of you has been waiting for and that you all told me it was about—but my little clock here says it is about half a minute to. Anyway, pursuant to standing order 30(b), it being 4 p.m., I am now required to call orders of the day.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to section 38(a) of the standing orders, a petition to the House may be presented to the Clerk. I present the Clerk a petition from the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario—

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is not a point of order. You can present it to the Clerk.

#### RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Standing order 38(i) says, "Within 24 sitting days of its presentation, the government shall file a response to a petition with the Clerk of the House and shall provide a copy of the response to the member who presented the petition."

We were contacted by an individual who is concerned that the government has not yet filed a response to petition number 296, which was tabled on March 29, 2007. I would ask you to direct the government to respond.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** I understand that the petition is overdue. Minister, I want to remind you that you are required, under standing order 38(i), to file a response to a petition within 24 sitting days of its presentation. Your response is now overdue, and I would ask that you give the House some indication as to when the response will be forthcoming.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The same point of order?

**Ms. Martel:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Just a moment. Minister?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** I will undertake to get an answer as soon as I possibly can.

#### VISITORS

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Just before orders of the day, I want to introduce the family of our page from Nickel Belt, Faith Fraser, who have come from Sudbury today. They are Conway, Angie, Kane, Lachlan and Jensen. They are here today, and we want to thank them for being here, to see their sister and their daughter.



**ORDERS OF THE DAY****EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT  
(PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE  
AND SCHOOL SAFETY), 2007****LOI DE 2007 MODIFIANT  
LA LOI SUR L'ÉDUCATION  
(DISCIPLINE PROGRESSIVE  
ET SÉCURITÉ DANS LES ÉCOLES)**

Ms. Wynne moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 212. An Act to amend the Education Act in respect of behaviour, discipline and safety / *Projet de loi 212, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation en ce qui concerne le comportement, la discipline et la sécurité.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Ms. Wynne.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne (Minister of Education):** I am very pleased to rise in the House today for third reading of the proposed amendments to the safe schools provision of the Education Act. I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Guelph–Wellington, who has done a terrific job initiating many of the changes that will come about as a result of this legislation, if it's passed, and who spent time talking to people around the province about the changes we should be making to the Education Act in the safe schools section. I look forward to the member for Guelph–Wellington talking about some of the changes that we heard as a result of our public hearings, and she will be speaking to those.

If passed, the legislation would more effectively combine discipline and opportunities for students to continue their education. When we came to office, we had heard quite clearly that the Safe Schools Act, as it was called by the previous government, was providing for inconsistency around the province, that there were issues pertaining to the changes that the previous government had made that needed to be addressed. So we set about to look at that piece of legislation and to make those changes that would make the legislation more applicable, more appropriate and more consistent around the province. That's why the concept of progressive discipline is the one that we are focusing on in our legislation. "Progressive discipline" means consistent and clear discipline, which includes, potentially, suspension or expulsion but also provides for a continuum of discipline that's appropriate to the incident that a student has been involved in.

If passed, these amendments would ensure that there are strong consequences for inappropriate behaviour and would also provide programs for students who have been suspended or expelled and allow those students to earn their way back into the classroom and complete their education. One of the things that had been happening was that students were excluded from the classroom on long suspensions or on expulsions and in some boards across the province there were not programs available to those

students. We believe that every student should have an opportunity, if they are on a long-term expulsion or a suspension, to have a program in place that would deal with academic issues but also social and life skills, some of the things that lead to problems for students in our schools. Those programs, and funding to provide those programs, are part of the legislation and the policy that underpins the legislation.

In particular, these amendments address the zero tolerance approach that was introduced by the former government, which was seen by many as being ineffective and unfair. The real issue around our safe schools policies and our legislation is that whatever we put in place has to be demonstrated to work. It is absolutely critical that all of our students and all of the staff in our schools feel safe. They have a right to feel safe in the school and on the school grounds.

I'm going to talk just a bit about some of the general issues around school safety that have been on our minds recently. The safe schools legislation, the Bill 212 amendments to the Education Act, are part of what we have been doing to introduce and to ensure an environment of safety in our schools. We know that there are many factors that create safety in our schools. Legislation is part of that mix, but there are many, many factors that lead to a safe environment in our schools.

Three and a half years ago, when we came into office, our school system was in disarray on many fronts, particularly in terms of the resources that boards had to hire and provide the appropriate number of adults in the school, including teachers and education workers. There had been resources removed from the school system over the previous eight years, and there was a real sense of distress in the system among school board trustees, who were trying to run the system without the resources that they needed. If we look at the factors that lead to a safe school, one of those factors is having enough adults in the system to actually create the conditions for safety. Our response to the need for that has been to provide resources to the system to hire more adults: approximately 7,000 more teachers in elementary and secondary, 7,600 more education workers in our schools. That includes caretaking staff, it includes education assistants, it includes the people who are the front line—our secretaries, our admin assistants—who make our schools safer places to be. That factor of more adults has been responded to by resources to hire more education workers, more teachers in our schools.

We know that a well-kept building, a physical environment that instils confidence and is physically safe but also looks safe and well-kept, is another factor that leads to safe schools. Having been a school trustee, I can tell you that we had been deferring maintenance in our schools because we did not have the resources to keep our schools in the condition that they needed to be in. By that I mean being able to do ongoing repairs and maintenance as well as renovations to our schools. Our response has been to provide access for our school boards to \$4 billion for repairs. There are millions of dollars in



our schools, thousands of projects around the province where our schools are being painted, there are boilers being replaced, there are windows being replaced. There is work being done that had been deferred for years and years. Every member in this House can go back to their riding and talk to the school trustees in any one of the four systems in our province and talk about the school repairs that have been done in each one of those systems. That is a very good thing.

If kids can feel good and teachers can feel good about the building that they're in, if support workers can feel good about the buildings that they're working in, that is going to lead to a safer environment. That factor of a well-kept physical environment we have responded to.

1610

Another factor that leads to a safe school is strong leadership. We know that we have many principals and superintendents in our schools who are new to the role. We know that our young teachers, our new teachers, need support. There had not been the professional development support for our teachers in the previous government; we have added professional development days. But more important than that, we've put money into the system for professional development. So we've provided the opportunity for teachers and support workers and our principals to have professional development opportunities.

We've also put in place a leadership institute so that the leaders in our system have an opportunity to share practices and talk about what actually works in the system and how to promote communities of learning, because if we can have that kind of sharing of ideas and sharing of best practices, then our children will benefit in our schools.

We've also set up a principals' reference group that allows principals to talk about the things that they need to be sharing and the resources that they need to have in the system in order to be able to provide the best possible leadership and how to do their jobs so that they are available to the schools in the best way possible, because we know that if we have a principal who is connected to the team in the school, that can lead to a much more effective school. So that leadership factor we've responded to.

Another factor that leads to a safe school and a safe school community is access to the public space, access to those school buildings, community use of schools. We know that under the previous regime our school doors were closed when teachers left the school and the children had left the school. There were no resources or very few resources for school boards to keep those schools open. It was only community groups that had a lot of money and could pay high fees that were able to access the school buildings. We've changed that. We've put in \$20 million every year, and that amount has been annualized. That has allowed school boards to reduce their fees, in some cases eliminate fees, so that community groups and community organizations can use

those school buildings. That creates a safe community, when you've got that public space accessible.

On that note, I am currently in conversation with the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board to look at how we might be able to work together to provide summer programming in schools in Toronto where there are very particular needs for summer access to our school buildings. So on that factor of public access, we've provided opportunity and provided funding for community use of schools.

In terms of having an engaged student body, we know that is a prime indicator of a safe school environment. We've provided student success teachers, alternative programming. We've got 6,000 more students graduating from high school every year. That means there are more high school students engaged in the learning process and graduating from high school. That means that the schools they are in are safer places to be.

We've approached this issue of safe schools with a very broad stroke. Bill 212 is a part of that overall agenda to connect and make sure that the system has what it needs. We have corrected mistakes by the previous government. More importantly, we've ensured that our students have the highest quality of education possible and that every one of our students has an opportunity to reach his or her potential. That's the agenda that we have put in place to address that broad issue of safe schools.

The final comment I want to make is to compare our approach, which is essentially a positive one that's rooted in a strong liberal—and that is small-l and capital-L Liberal—belief in human potential. It is not a pessimistic belief about human nature. I want to just talk for a second about that negative, defeatist view of humanity that was articulated this past weekend by Globe and Mail columnist Margaret Wenté. First of all, she got the facts wrong in her column, where she said that expulsion was no longer possible in the system. Expulsion is still possible but, again, it's on that continuum of progressive discipline. In fact, we've added bullying to the list of infractions for which suspension has to be considered, so we've strengthened those provisions.

Still, we are not tied to a negative view of our students. Here's what Ms. Wenté says: "Our well-meaning education-promoting Premier is about to make a sorry situation worse. He has decreed that from now on we will force students to stay in the system until they're 18, whether they like it or not. Instead of teaching the teachable, administrators will now be forced to spend countless hours attempting to track the whereabouts of sub-adults who can't be taught and have no desire to learn."

Our approach is so far from that approach. We do not believe there is a student in this province who doesn't want to learn; we do not believe there is a student in this province who is not teachable. Our approach says that we believe in the potential of every student in this province to be the very best he or she can be. That's what the Safe Schools Act is about, that's what our Bill 212 is about, and I'd like to turn it over to my parliamentary assistant.



**The Deputy Speaker:** It goes in rotation. Further debate? The member for Oak Ridges.

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** Speaker, I want to make it very clear that I am not the parliamentary assistant to the minister; I am the critic for the official opposition, and I'm pleased to speak on behalf of our caucus. We will be supporting this bill. I indicated that in the course of debate during second reading. I also indicated our intention to support this legislation during committee.

But I want to take a few minutes to also express our concerns relating to this legislation, first of all to make it very clear that we certainly take the view that no piece of legislation is ever perfect. In fact, when the Safe Schools Act was first introduced by the previous government, of which I am proud to have been a part, we stated at that time that there would have to be periodic reviews of this legislation to determine how the implementation was proceeding.

It's interesting that when you look at the intent expressed in this legislation, either in the preamble to the legislation or in speeches made by the minister or the parliamentary assistant, the objective of the previous legislation is identical to the objective stated by this government, and that is to ensure that we have a safe school environment. It is also to ensure that for those students who have challenges within the existing school environment or classroom environment, be they disciplinary issues or other challenges the student may have, there be the appropriate programs put in place—alternate learning programs—that are fully resourced, that are supported both by the appropriately trained teachers as well as the financial resources, to ensure that those young people have an opportunity to integrate back into the classroom and are given the appropriate supports while they are under either suspension or expulsion.

No student in this province should ever be written off. Regardless of what their circumstances are, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, of the education system, to ensure that every student is given the opportunity to become the best they can possibly be. That was the intent of the original Safe Schools Act, it is without question the intent of this amendment act to that legislation, and for that reason we support it.

What I also want to point out, however—and we attempted to do this during the committee hearings and again during clause-by-clause when, following the committee hearings—and we heard from many stakeholders. We heard support, again in principle, in the same way that we as the official opposition support the intent of this legislation. We heard about the implementation issues that will be faced on the ground by our school boards, by the administrators in our schools, by the principals who will have the challenge of then implementing this legislation.

1620

We heard from the teachers' federations calling on the government to implement amendments that would ensure that the intent can be realized, that it's not just one more announcement, not just a smoke-and-mirrors exercise

that's fine when we talk about it here and when we roll out the intent in the public forum. Everyone of course welcomes what is being said about the intent and what we want for students across the province, but, as with every other piece of legislation, the devil is always in the details. If legislation or the intent of legislation breaks down, it's never because there was a disagreement in terms of the intent; it's always because of the challenges that are realized in the implementation.

To that end, I want to express our disappointment that the government did not listen to most of the presentations that were made during committee hearings. I have here before me the Hansard relating to the clause-by-clause proceedings on this bill. For those who are not familiar with the legislative process, clause-by-clause committee hearings is where, following submissions from the public, the government, as well as opposition parties, have an opportunity to bring forward formal amendments to the legislation that we feel will, in the final analysis, improve the legislation and take into consideration the submissions from stakeholders who came with good intentions and who expected not that every amendment that's being proposed would necessarily be accepted, but there is an expectation that at least some of their recommendations would be incorporated into the final piece of legislation.

I express our disappointment that not only were we not allowed by order of this government to proceed through the entire clause-by-clause hearings; we were barely into our clause-by-clause deliberations when the Chair brought to an end any proposals that we wanted to bring forward by way of amendment. Why? Because the very proceedings were time-allocated. The time allocation motion was read into the record again, which meant that from that point on, after I think I had an opportunity to present perhaps 10 or 12 amendments out of the many we had prepared, not even to be listened to, the time allocation motion of this government simply muzzled the opposition parties on this. They were not even able to read into the record what their amendments were, and everything was deemed to have been passed. I find that offensive, particularly coming from a government that, on the one hand, is suggesting that they will be the champions of parliamentary reform, of democratic reform. They even have a minister who was named the minister responsible for democratic reform. What a scam that is.

The fact is that, instead of having democratic reform, what we have is a shutting down of the democratic process. Even the legislation that this government introduced to initiate democratic reform was time-allocated. In other words, you have the gall to bring into this House legislation that, when it is announced, is supposedly to reform how people are elected to this place, to increase the democratic awareness, and what does the government do? The government introduces closure legislation which kept us from even debating that bill.

But back to Bill 212: There were a number of recommendations made that were ignored. I want to read just for the record a couple of recommendations and com-



ments that were made during committee that I think are very, very important to the stakeholders and that, as I said, were ignored.

First of all, I want to read from the submission made by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association. This is being submitted by Donna Marie Kennedy and Victoria Hunt from OECTA. They made reference to the issue of progressive discipline. We just heard from the Minister of Education that progressive discipline, the concept of progressive discipline, is the foundation on which they brought forward this legislation and it was going to be the guiding principle of these changes. Here is what Donna Marie Kennedy of OECTA had to say during committee about the government's version or view of progressive discipline:

"While progressive discipline is a lofty ideal, in reality it only works if there are sufficient support services within the system: child and youth care workers, psychologists, social workers, guidance counsellors. All of these services were severely cut in the last decade. Progressive discipline will not work unless the students' behaviours and needs are being addressed. If a student is not suspended and is only to be sent back to the classroom, then the problems have not been addressed. There is no point in having a program in place without some kind of consequence, without some kind of follow-up. It sends a message that anything goes. This is not what we want. We need to be assured that appropriate actions are being initiated immediately and what the consequences will be."

I don't see any evidence, certainly not in the amendments that were put forward, that would have addressed some of the clarifications, the definitions that were called for. Certainly at this stage, the government has done nothing to respond to that concern. We'll be hopeful that perhaps through regulation some of these shortcomings will be addressed and, again, that the call by stakeholders that they be involved and consulted in the development of those regulations would be heeded by the government.

I want to make reference to another concern expressed by OECTA. On this point, I must say that I will take issue with the principle here that has been expressed. The objective of the original Safe Schools Act was to empower teachers to deal with disciplinary matters within the classroom. There were many times when teachers would complain about the fact that they were essentially powerless to deal with disciplinary matters, whether it be in a classroom or whether it be in the hallways of our schools. We have had some very interesting, very disturbing comments from teachers over the last few weeks concerning the tragic incident at the C.W. Jefferys school. One of those reports came from a teacher, a long-time area resident, who spoke about the circumstances at this particular school. I cannot believe that this is an isolated incident to just one school, and that's why it is so disturbing.

I want to, again, for the record, just read into Hansard what this teacher had to say about her experience. This is

Sandra Fusco, quoted in the Saturday, May 26, 2007, Toronto Sun:

"Who is to blame for this latest act of violence among our youth? Not song lyrics or action films or video games. We are all to blame.

"First, there is the school board which is hesitant to administer effective consequences to misbehaviour for fear of legal repercussions. Next, there are some apathetic administrators who do unfathomable damage when clear messages about acceptable and unacceptable behaviours are not communicated clearly to students through consequences for actions or proper follow-up. Furthermore, they fail to ensure a safe work and learning environment....

"Also, there are the complacent teachers; many of whom use complacency as a coping mechanism in such a hostile working environment. Finally, there are some parents who, for one reason or another, are not building the basic ethics and morals of decency and respect for others and human life in their children. In short, we are all to blame."

1630

I suggest that there is one other group of people which is responsible and is to blame, and that is this group here in this House.

I challenged the Minister of Education, following this incident, as to whether she had been asked or whether she herself had taken the initiative to launch a comprehensive investigation into what has taken place at the C.W. Jefferys school. We must all agree that the reports of the incidents at this school are unacceptable. What we're hearing very clearly is that there is a responsibility for an independent investigation and that we must, together, ensure that the appropriate mechanisms are put in place to ensure that tragedies like this never happen again. But it comes down to empowerment—empowerment of teachers, empowerment of principals—and ensuring that the resources are there.

With regard to the issue of empowering teachers, I was disappointed to hear once again from OECTA, at the submissions to the committee, "We oppose any attempt by the government to download discipline onto the classroom teacher. It's not fair to the other students in the classroom; it's not fair to the teacher. It's an impossible expectation for the teachers to handle all the discipline in the classrooms. It needs to be handled at the principal's office."

We've also heard from principals who are saying that this government has imposed an impossible burden on them. They have cut back on the amount of supervision time that teachers are required to commit to the classroom, but they haven't replaced that reduced supervision time with any other means of providing that supervision. If, in the wisdom of the government, it in fact deems it appropriate that teachers themselves should not commit as much time to supervision, then surely there must be some other way of providing that support to principals by providing additional resources for supervision.



I say to you in closing that while we support the intent of this legislation to ensure that the appropriate measures are in place to, on the one hand, have discipline in the schools and provide resources and alternative programs to students who, for whatever reason, are not coping within the classroom setting, what we cannot do is simply put out legislation and pat ourselves on the back that somehow we've solved the problem, when we know full well that in many of our schools today there are serious problems, primarily due to a lack of resources. I would appeal to teachers, principals and school boards that we take very, very seriously this issue of ensuring the appropriate resources are there and that we heed the call of this teacher, Sandra Fusco, who makes a very strong statement to us all: "We are all to blame."

If this Legislature does not take it upon itself and if the Minister of Education does not take it upon herself to do more than simply pass legislation, then it truly does rest on all of our shoulders should another tragedy such as happened at C.W. Jefferys occur in this province. Pray that it doesn't.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns (Toronto-Danforth):** It's been interesting to me to go through the Hansard for commentary on this bill that was made by our critic, Rosario Marchese, at second reading and to look at the analysis that he gave of this bill, which essentially takes us back to the situation we had before zero tolerance.

It's an interesting historical period because when the zero tolerance bill—the requirement—was first brought in, it was opposed by the NDP, it was opposed by Rosario Marchese, and it was opposed by the Liberals. The understanding was very clear at the time that the bill, at best would reduce some conflict within schools, but overall its impact on society would be negative. Many students would be forced out on to the street and they would not have the social supports, they would not have the psychological supports that would allow them to come to grips with the destructive or antisocial behaviour that had brought them to be expelled from school.

The worry that our critic, the member for Trinity-Spadina, Rosario Marchese, expressed when this bill was read at second reading, and I think the worry that we still have, is that the supports for troubled young people are not there within the schools. We see a situation in which teachers, who are hard-pressed to keep up with their class loads now, will have one tool, a blunt tool, that of suspension, at the direction of the principal. They will have the blunt tool of recommending expulsion to the board of education, which will have the final decision in this matter. But we don't see the other tools that will be needed in terms of social and psychological supports to actually deal with the problems in a way that will give satisfaction, that will avoid both the larger tragedies that we've seen recently in this community and the smaller, mundane, day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month tragedies that ultimately result in a person's life being wasted, being set aside, outside of the mainstream productivity and opportunity in this society.

I had an opportunity this past weekend in my riding, at a street sale, to talk to a teacher who is teaching in the

west end of Toronto, a woman in her 40s who has seen a lot over the last few decades in our school system. She simply wanted me to convey to the Legislature, the minister and the minister's parliamentary assistant that she and her colleagues are very much at the end of their rope because they experience a situation in their schools, in the schools that she's been teaching in, of growing numbers of social problems, of children coming from households where they don't get the support and the nurturance they need, where the teacher, when she tries to phone parents, finds people who are either working two jobs and not able to think about the children other than making sure they have a roof over their heads and food on the table—crucial elements, obviously, but not enough to direct and shape a young person's life. She finds people who are at the end of their strength and not able to deal with the social problems she has to deal with as a teacher, not able to deal with the issues she brings to their attention because they don't have it at home. The teacher, the woman I was talking to on the weekend, doesn't have in school the supports, the framework or the culture necessary to keep kids going in the direction they have to go in.

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She talked about the state of school maintenance. In her school, one janitor; 600 kids. She said simply that it wasn't possible, that when the janitor tried to keep things in order, keep things clean—and, as was said earlier, it has an impact on people's morale, on their sense of that school, on a sense of order, on a sense of being cared for, being taken care of—it was not doable. It was consistent with my experience of going back into the schools after a number of years out of the political system and just looking at the decay that was there, that is there and is not being addressed in the way it has to be addressed.

Our critic, Rosario Marchese, made a very strong argument on second reading that I believe bears repeating today, and that is that this government has been in power since the fall of 2003. This government knew from the Human Rights Commissioner that the Safe Schools Act, the zero tolerance, was discriminatory; was disproportionately affecting the disabled, disproportionately affecting children of colour, black children; and that this policy was applied unevenly across the system.

This government knew early on because its leadership rejected the Safe Schools Act prior to its election and said that, frankly, what was on the table had to be reversed. Yet instead of bringing that in in the first year—what is it?—four years have gone by. Hundreds, maybe thousands of students have been expelled; social problems that should have been addressed over those years have been left untouched; yet, at the last moment and possibly the last day that this Legislature is sitting, this act is to be passed. The question I think everyone has to ask themselves is why, given the knowledge that the Minister of Education and the Premier have about the profound failings of that policy approach, action wasn't taken years ago to spare those children who have been expelled, to end that discrimination, to end that unequal,



unevenly applied policy that has done damage and has not actually helped our children and our schools.

There is no question that principals need the authority and the power when they deal with children who are disruptive, when they deal with children who are a threat to other children and when they deal with bullying. There's no question that principals have to have the power to act. But that again is a blunt instrument. It is an instrument that may temporarily take a child out of class, take a child out of school, but does not deal with the ongoing and profound social dynamics that will someday see that child who's been taken out involved in far more serious conflicts with far more serious consequences.

In the last round of debate, I had an opportunity to talk about the cause of those destructive dynamics. I think a lot of it has to do with poverty; a lot of it has to do with families that crumple under the pressure of lack of money, lack of stable housing, families that crumple under the impact of racism and lack of opportunity. The minister, I think correctly, noted that one should not simply dwell on those factors, that in fact destructive behaviour, antisocial behaviour, was a problem across the socio-economic spectrum. There's no question. If you have parents who have problems with addiction and they have money, children are going to have difficulties. If you have parents whose style of raising children is a bullying style, is an emotionally damaging style, then that damage will be reflected, will be echoed, will come out again in class. So there's no question that there are issues beyond race, beyond class, that cause problems in school. But there's no question in my mind that poverty in this society has a huge negative impact, that it corrodes families. At the most fundamental level, when you have children coming to school who have not eaten well and are not going to eat well, who are hungry, they are not going to behave in a way that is going to be conducive to their learning and they are not going to behave in a way that's conducive to other children feeling safe or other children having a good learning environment.

We had a debate in this chamber about the national child benefit, the one that's being clawed back by this government and will be clawed back for a number of years to come. That action on the part of the government to capture that money instead of ensuring that it's available for people is one that contributes to a lack of safety in our schools. That policy is a failing.

Now, children often won't speak about those issues in that way. But in the last election I was in, the by-election in my riding, I was in a Coffee Time one day just having a sandwich and a coffee, and a woman came up to me. I would say she was in her 30s. She was slender, she was neatly dressed—not richly dressed, but neatly dressed—and she asked if I was running for office. I said yes. She said, "Well, I'm on ODSP and I want you to know that we are hungry. Please do something about this." She was not running off being wild; she was just being very reasonable and direct: "We are hungry." So when this government did not end the clawback of the child benefit, deferred that for years, it said to those who are hungry,

"You're going to have to wait for a while, because we're going to continue to use that money. We're going to continue to take that money to deal with our budgetary issues."

When we look at the housing situation, we know that there are tens of thousands on the list in Ontario waiting for affordable housing. In my constituency office, those are normally the most heart-wrenching stories that we get, of people who can't afford to pay their rent and pay their other expenses. These are families, these are seniors, these are single people on disability. Yet this government has approached the housing file with extreme slowness and extreme lack of urgency. Then we come back to this bill that attempts to deal with those problems that arise in large part because people are materially deprived and we say this bill is in many ways a band-aid on a profound social problem. My colleague Rosario Marchese talked about the fact that in the 1990s the city of Toronto Board of Education had youth workers, had social workers who would actually go out and work with young people, deal with those who had those social problems, those psychological problems. Although, again, I don't think that was enough, and certainly it wasn't a question of paradise at that time, but at least you had social supports working in the classes, in the schools, reaching out to deal with those problems, and we're not seeing that here.

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Our critic Mr. Marchese talked about the announcement of \$23 million that was going to be spent on dealing with these problems, giving support to boards so that boards would be able to provide classes or alternatives to those who are suspended. I'd say better that than nothing, but he had tremendous concern that that money, that \$23 million, was not new money but simply a reallocation from another envelope that was already pretty thin.

I know that the minister has talked before about how tremendous amounts of money are going to be put forward, made available to deal with problems like the physical state of schools. I want to read what Mr. Marchese had to say at second reading about the grand promises of funding to deal with physical problems. He said:

"To correct your record a little bit, this record of putting money into schools, your claim is that you put so much money into capital projects. Let me explain why that is not accurate. The Tories did a study in 2002 and said you should spend \$4.2 billion"—on capital repairs in schools in Ontario; \$4.2 billion. "Minister Kennedy said three years ago that he was putting aside \$275 million to leverage \$4 billion in capital projects. The first phase was supposed to be \$75 million. You haven't even completed your first phase. You didn't even spend more than \$25 million. Your \$75 million would have generated \$1.2 billion worth of capital expenses, but you haven't even spent \$25 million, so far behind are you. That's how bad it is."

That's the concern: that an announcement will be made and, if carried through, it may well mean—and I



hate to use the phrase—that Peter may be robbed to pay Paul. That one very necessary expenditure will be undermined to deal with another very necessary expenditure, and the net effect will be to not deal with the problems in our schools but simply to give people something that will look good in campaign literature.

I know that for parents and others who are watching this debate, there's no question in their minds that they want principals and school boards to have the power to suspend and, where the problem is serious enough, to expel. I can't argue that, but I know that in order for us to actually deal with these problems, we're going to have to have those other investments. I want parents, teachers and principals who are struggling with these problems now to know that this bill and this government's commitment are not going to go far enough, are not going to go the distance that has to be gone to deal with these problems.

Don't forget that one of the things that was done when the city of Toronto last ran into difficulty with its school spending, when Paul Christie was appointed superintendent, overrode the Toronto Board of Education because the city of Toronto's board of education couldn't balance its books—he got rid of the youth workers. That was a very bad move. That was setting aside the concerns of children. That was setting aside the needs of our young people. But don't forget that although Paul Christie is gone and although the Toronto District School Board is no longer under supervision, the funds have not come back to restore those workers. That legacy of under-investing in our youth, that legacy of not actually taking care of the problem, has continued on for almost four years. This bill will deal with only a small part of the problem. It won't deal with the full range of social problems that our teachers face, that our principals face, that our children face.

I think we all have to ask why this government waited until the end of its mandate to bring this bill forward. We have to ask why a government that knew in opposition that zero tolerance, the Safe Schools Act, was a mistake, waited so long to correct that mistake, why this government has not, in fact, made the investment back into youth workers, school psychologists, social workers—a full range of initiatives to ensure that our kids are safe and well taken care of.

I expect that we will be voting for this bill, but we do it in recognition that we're simply restoring the status that existed before the Safe Schools Act, not taking the big step forward that we need to take.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington):** I'm pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill 212, dealing with safe schools and progressive discipline.

As a number of people have referenced, the Safe Schools Act was originally introduced in 2000 by the previous government, and there have been a number of concerns throughout its history around whether or not it was really working, whether it was really creating safe schools. Because of that, our government instituted a

review which was conducted by the safe schools action team, which I had the privilege of chairing.

One of the strengths of our government is that before we finalize policy, we do go out to and speak to people, and then we listen to what they have to say. In this case, consultations took place in six communities: Ottawa, London, Etobicoke, Scarborough, Sudbury and Thunder Bay. We heard from literally hundreds of people. The action team based our recommendations, upon which the bill is largely based, on what we heard from those hundreds of people all around the province.

We focused our review in four areas. We looked at consistency, fairness, discipline and prevention, and we heard that with the existing bill there were problems in all four of those areas.

We found that the bill was inconsistently implemented as previously structured. In fact, the suspension rate ranged—from 2% to 35% of the students in one board had been suspended in one year. We found some students who were suspended without any consideration of the reason behind their action or whether suspension was really the most appropriate form of discipline for these kids. We also found that when kids were repeatedly suspended or expelled for a limited time, they fell further behind in their schoolwork, which meant they were more likely to disrupt classes and more likely to drop out.

We found in some areas of the province that when students were expelled, they had access to programs that would help them earn their way back in, correct their behaviour and continue academic studies. We found that in other areas of the province, there were no such programs available. In fact, these very sorts of alternative programs: One of the things that we will be doing—it was in the budget—is providing \$31 million for the implementation of Bill 212. That is new money, and \$23 million of that new money will be going to providing just such alternative programs in all parts of the province, not just in 12 locations as is currently the situation.

We also, as a team, met with the chair of the tribunal which hears expulsion appeals. Both the chair of the tribunal and a number of the people we talked to around the province said that one of the most serious problems with the existing act was in the whole area of something called limited expulsion, which is expulsion that could be done by principals. The observation of the chair and others was that in many parts of the province, there was no programming and that de facto became a permanent expulsion without a hearing, without any opportunity to earn your way into re-entry. Consequently, the safe schools action team did recommend that we move to a system where all expulsions are done by a board or a committee of the board to protect against that.

When we looked at discipline, we found that within the existing legislation there is some flexibility. But there was a lot of confusion around that flexibility and about how to apply discretion. We found that in some schools there was a form of progressive discipline being applied and in other schools it was strictly zero tolerance. There was a lot of confusion about what to do.

One of the things this act will do that the team recommended is that we need to be very clear about giving directions to schools about how to use progressive discipline, about how to use what are called mitigating factors, which is looking at the “why” of the action.

I would like to point out here that there is some confusion in the media—not in this House, given the comments I’ve heard. Progressive discipline should not be confused with no discipline. What progressive discipline means is that you look carefully at the situation and you apply the appropriate discipline. So yes, there is discipline and, in some circumstances, that may be suspension or it may be expulsion, but it will always be the appropriate consequence, not just something that is a knee-jerk reaction.

When we had the public hearings at committee, we got some suggestions about how to fine-tune the bill. I don’t have time to speak to all of them, but we did listen carefully to what people had to say at committee and we have made a number of amendments. For example, the school boards said, “Now that we have to have hearings with three trustees”—because the team recommended, and the government has responded in this bill, that it’s important that we have a team of three trustees as a minimum in order to have a fair hearing—“we really can’t get that together in two weeks.” We’ve given them an extra week.

We also heard from parent advocates who said, “We really don’t particularly”—in the immigrant communities where language and culture are an issue—“have time for people to understand the issues around suspension and expulsion. We need longer to appeal.” So we’ve also given those folks an extra week to appeal so that we’re being fair. We’re giving people time to act.

One of the things we heard from teachers is that they weren’t always being informed about why the student was absent. They didn’t always know that the student had been suspended. So we’re actually putting it right in the act that on the list of people who have to be notified of a suspension are not just the parents but also the teacher, so the teacher knows what is going on. That’s particularly important in secondary schools. We made a number of amendments.

My time is almost up. I would like to say thank you to my action team. I would like to say thank you to the ministry staff who are here, there and about. I’d like to say thank you to the opposition parties who have indicated they will be supporting the bill. I think we are going to make things very much better for the students of this province.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 1, 2007, I am now required to put the

question. Ms. Wynne has moved third reading of Bill 212, An Act to amend the Education Act in respect of behaviour, discipline and safety. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say “aye.”

All those opposed, say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1704 to 1714.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Gerretsen, John	Oraziotti, David
Arthurs, Wayne	Gravelle, Michael	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Balkissoon, Bas	Hardeman, Ernie	Parsons, Ernie
Barrett, Toby	Horwath, Andrea	Peters, Steve
Bentley, Christopher	Hoy, Pat	Peterson, Tim
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jeffrey, Linda	Phillips, Gerry
Bisson, Gilles	Klees, Frank	Prue, Michael
Bountrogianni, Marie	Kormos, Peter	Qaadri, Shafiq
Broten, Laurel C.	Kular, Kuldip	Racco, Mario G.
Brownell, Jim	Kwinter, Monte	Ramal, Khalil
Bryant, Michael	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ramsay, David
Cansfield, Donna H.	Leal, Jeff	Rinaldi, Lou
Caplan, David	Levac, Dave	Sandals, Liz
Chan, Michael	Marsales, Judy	Smith, Monique
Colle, Mike	Martiniuk, Gerry	Smitherman, George
Delaney, Bob	Mauro, Bill	Tabuns, Peter
Dhillon, Vic	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Di Cocco, Caroline	McNeely, Phil	Tory, John
Dombrowsky, Leona	Miller, Norm	Van Bommel, Maria
Duguid, Brad	Milloy, John	Watson, Jim
Dunlop, Garfield	Mitchell, Carol	Wilkinson, John
Elliott, Christine	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Witmer, Elizabeth
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Munro, Julia	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fonseca, Peter	O’Toole, John	Zimmer, David

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed, please stand and be recognized by the Clerk.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 72; the nays are 0.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried. Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be named as in the motion.

Orders of the day.

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I move adjournment of the House.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. The deputy government House leader had moved adjournment of the House. Agreed? Agreed.

This House is adjourned until 6:45 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 1718.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman  
Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown  
Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller  
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffières parlementaires: Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum  
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Arnott, Ted</b> (PC)	Waterloo–Wellington	First Deputy Chair of the committee of the whole House / Premier Vice-Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Finances
Balkissoon, Bas (L)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services (Community Safety) / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels (Sécurité communautaire)
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick</b> (L)	Sudbury	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher</b> (L)	London West / London-Ouest	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Deputy government whip / whip adjoint du gouvernement
Bisson, Gilles (ND)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Chief New Democratic Party whip / whip en chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
<b>Bountrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie</b> (L)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J.</b> (L)	St. Catharines	Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, government House leader / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C.</b> (L)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
<b>Brown, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A.</b> (L)	Algoma–Manitoulin	Speaker / Président
Brownell, Jim (L)	Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Tourisme
<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael</b> (L)	St. Paul's	Attorney General / procureur général
<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H.</b> (L)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David</b> (L)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V.</b> (L)	Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael</b> (L)	Markham	Minister of Revenue / ministre du Revenu
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	Deputy opposition whip / whip adjoint de l'opposition
<b>Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike</b> (L)	Eglinton–Lawrence	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Craitor, Kim (L)	Niagara Falls	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services (Correctional and Emergency Services) / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels (Services correctionnels et situations d'urgence)
<b>Crozier, Bruce</b> (L)	Essex	Deputy Speaker, Chair of the committee of the whole House / Vice-Président, Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Delaney, Bob (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for seniors / adjoint parlementaire au ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Dhillon, Vic (L)	Brampton West–Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest–Mississauga	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Government Services / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Services gouvernementaux
<b>Di Cocco, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline</b> (L)	Samia–Lambton	Minister of Culture / ministre de la Culture

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
DiNovo, Cheri (ND)	Parkdale-High Park	
<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b>	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Duguid, Brad (L)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Municipal Affairs) / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement (Affaires municipales)
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L)</b>	Windsor-St. Clair	Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby-Ajax	
Ferreira, Paul (ND)	York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Oakville	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de l'Énergie
Fonseca, Peter (L)	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health Promotion / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Promotion de la santé
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Gravelle, Michael (L)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / Thunder Bay-Superior-Nord	
Hampton, Howard (ND)	Kenora-Rainy River	Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Horwath, Andrea (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	
Hoy, Pat (L)	Chatham-Kent Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Erie-Lincoln	
Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and minister responsible for democratic renewal / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales et ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Klees, Frank (PC)	Oak Ridges	
Kormos, Peter (ND)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	New Democratic Party House leader / leader parlementaire du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Kular, Kuldip (L)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (L)</b>	York Centre / York-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade and to the Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce et au ministre des Petites Entreprises et de l'Entrepreneuriat
Leal, Jeff (L)	Peterborough	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre de l'Environnement
Levac, Dave (L)	Brant	Chief government whip / whip en chef du gouvernement
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean-Carleton	
Marchese, Rosario (ND)	Trinity-Spadina	
Marsales, Judy (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	
Martel, Shelley (ND)	Nickel Belt	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
Matthews, Deborah (L)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services and minister responsible for women's issues / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires et ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mauro, Bill (L)	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton</b> (L)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
McMeekin, Ted (L)	Ancaster–Dundas– Flamborough–Aldershot	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre de l'Éducation
McNeely, Phil (L)	Ottawa–Orléans	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre des Transports
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine</b> (L)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	Chief opposition whip / whip en chef de l'opposition
Milloy, John (L)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
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Racco, Mario G. (L)	Thornhill	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Travail
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Smith, Monique M. (L)	Nipissing	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
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Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament



Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 4 June 2007

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 4 juin 2007

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 4 June 2007

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 4 juin 2007

*The House met at 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ELECTION STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2007

### LOI DE 2007 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES ÉLECTIONS

Mrs. Bountrogianni moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 218, An Act to amend the Election Act and the Election Finances Act and make related amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 218, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale et la Loi sur le financement des élections et apportant des modifications connexes à d'autres lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Mrs. Bountrogianni.

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** I'm pleased to lead off third reading debate on Bill 218, the Election Statute Law Amendment Act, 2007.

I would like to thank, first of all, my colleague and parliamentary assistant the member from Brampton Centre, Linda Jeffrey, for all her work on the democratic renewal file and particularly her work on all the legislation that has been introduced and debated in the Legislature.

As minister responsible for democratic renewal, I'm proud of this bill because it is about one of our most fundamental rights, the right to vote. This legislation, if passed, would make amendments to the Election Act that would make it more convenient for Ontarians to exercise their right to vote. At the same time, it would enhance the integrity of the electoral process.

Nos élections ne sont pas restées au diapason de la réalité de la vie des citoyens. Les initiatives de renouveau démocratique entreprises par le gouvernement McGuinty sont conçues pour assurer que les processus électoraux répondent aux besoins des Ontariens et Ontariennes. C'est justement le but qu'atteindra cette loi proposée si elle est adoptée.

A number of the voting improvements in the legislation were recommended to Mr. John Hollins, Ontario's Chief Election Officer. In fact, the CEO endorsed these changes at the standing committee on the Legislative As-

sembly on May 17. He said, "If I use the three pillars of a fair election—accessibility, integrity and participation—I believe this bill is a step in the right direction."

We are committed to providing public services that are easy to access, as well as improving our current democratic system. The passage of this legislation would represent real progress in making it easier than ever for all Ontarians to exercise their democratic right to vote by providing new, flexible voting options.

I'm confident that all members on all sides of the House would support initiatives that would help encourage more Ontarians to vote. That is one of the driving forces behind this legislation.

The changes proposed in Bill 218 include practical, cost-efficient steps to modernize elections in Ontario. If passed, they would be in place for the October 10, 2007, election.

We understand that Ontarians lead very busy lives. That's why this legislation, if passed, would extend polling hours by one hour at the end of polling day. Polls that regularly close at 8 p.m. would now close at 9 p.m. so that people have more time to vote on election day. Due to the time zone difference, polls in northwestern Ontario that close at 7 p.m. would close at 8 p.m. To clarify any misconceptions in this House, voters in northwestern Ontario would also get that additional hour to vote.

At committee, the CEO said, "Anything that increases opportunity and ease for the elector is a good thing ... the longer hours will help prevent lineups in the evening."

Le projet de loi 218 permettrait aussi plus facilement aux citoyens de l'Ontario de voter lors d'une élection générale ordinaire, en augmentant le nombre de jours de vote par anticipation de six à 13 aux bureaux du directeur du scrutin et de six à 10 à d'autres endroits.

Comme l'a dit le directeur général des élections, « En quelques mots, cela signifie plus d'options pour nos électeurs. »

## 1850

The accuracy of the permanent register of electors would be improved if this legislation is passed. The legislation would require Elections Ontario to undertake new targeted registration to update the permanent register of electors, thereby improving the voters' list. A number of criteria are provided for targeting these efforts at people who will most likely be left off the list. These include mobile populations, first-time voters and electors who are new citizens. The CEO said that this delivers on Elections Ontario's pre-existing mandate to maintain and update the permanent register of electors.



Le directeur général des élections serait désormais autorisé à mettre à l'essai de nouvelles technologies lors d'élections partielles futures. La loi, si elle est adoptée, éliminerait l'exigence actuelle que le directeur général des élections obtienne la permission des principaux partis politiques pour mettre à l'essai une nouvelle technologie. C'est une façon raisonnable et mesurée d'assurer que nos élections se déroulent dans un environnement aussi sûr et accessible que possible.

The CEO said at the standing committee that this proposed authority "does not come lightly. As we continue to introduce pilot projects into by-elections to test new electoral processes, this will enable us to introduce emerging technologies and alternative voting methods, which will hopefully lead us into cost-saving partnerships with municipalities. Further, this will position us to provide first-hand information to the Legislature on these emerging technologies and alternative voting methods while providing much-needed experience for our staff."

If this legislation is passed, this bill would also eliminate confusion at the ballot box. Party names would appear on ballots in the next election. Candidates' names on ballots would be followed by their political affiliation where the candidate has been endorsed by the party. Independent candidates' names would be identified as independents if requested by the candidate. This would help voters make more informed choices. The CEO said that this measure will be "well-received by electors." He said that Elections Ontario receives "constant questions about why party names are not on the ballot."

This legislation would establish additional accessibility criteria for selecting polling locations. Criteria for selecting polling locations would include convenience, capacity, familiarity and lack of geographic barriers. This ensures that all possible steps are taken to make polling places as accessible as possible for all Ontarians.

If this bill passes, the CEO would be required to consult on administration of the Election Act with an advisory committee representing all of Ontario's registered political parties. While the CEO is independent of any political party, he would benefit from the advice and insight of the parties. The CEO describes the advisory committee as "an essential means to educate and brainstorm with parties between events or elections with political stakeholders of this process. The consultation is and will continue to be a non-partisan forum in which all registered parties can contribute to the strength of the electoral process."

Nous serons plus à même de protéger l'intégrité des élections si la loi est adoptée. Tous les électeurs seraient tenus de présenter une preuve d'identité et, dans certains cas, une preuve de résidence. Le directeur général des élections aurait le pouvoir de déterminer les types d'identification acceptables.

"The electorate is looking for assurance that only qualified electors vote and that they only vote once," said the CEO at the hearing on Bill 218. "This can only help the integrity of the electoral process, and that's a win." Although this is a change that the CEO requested, he told

the committee that he will proceed with caution if the legislation is passed. He will ensure that the requirement of identification "does not make it difficult or disenfranchise eligible electors. This includes electors who, because of their situations, such as disability or lack of a permanent residence, do not have or cannot provide the ID needed to be able to receive a ballot." The CEO also said that he will conduct a thorough consultation with stakeholders representing Ontario's diverse communities to ensure inclusiveness in his determination of the documents or class of documents that will be accepted as proof of identity and residence.

Cette loi est une première étape mesurée vers d'autres initiatives potentielles de réforme à long terme du fonctionnement des élections dans la province.

This legislation strikes a balance between real improvements to the process and preventing any disruption of the upcoming election. This legislation would do more than just modernize Ontario's electoral process. On May 15, the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform submitted its report, *One Ballot, Two Votes: A New Way to Vote in Ontario*, recommending that Ontario adopt a new mixed member proportional system. A referendum on this recommendation will be held in conjunction with the next general election on October 10, 2007.

If passed, this bill would require the Chief Electoral Officer to conduct a neutral public education campaign to provide electors across Ontario with the following information: the date of the referendum, the content of the choices in the referendum, the referendum process and the question electors will be asked to vote on.

Il est essentiel de mettre en place des activités d'éducation publique pour que les électeurs ontariens obtiennent les renseignements dont ils ont besoin pour faire un choix éclairé lors du référendum sur la réforme électorale. Il est indispensable que ces renseignements soient neutres et impartiaux pour que les Ontariens et Ontariennes puissent se forger leur propre opinion sur cette question importante. Le 10 octobre, chaque électeur de la province aura la possibilité de faire son propre choix dans le cadre d'un référendum.

We believe that Ontarians should be able to exercise their democratic right to vote. We believe that it shouldn't be a chore to get on the voters' list. We believe that busy people should be able to more easily vote in advance polls or at the end of a hard-working day. We also believe that people should have to show identification in order to protect the integrity of the electoral process. Taken together with other key democratic renewal initiatives, including the successful completion of the citizens' assembly process and our recently passed referendum legislation, the provisions to modernize elections in Ontario will contribute significantly to our renewed vision of democracy. This vision is of democracy that is inclusive, participatory, transparent and accountable. I'm proud to stand in support of this bill and urge all members of this House to join me in supporting the bill.

Before I finish, I would like to just take a moment to thank all of the members in this House for the high level



of debate that we have heard on this bill as well as the other democratic renewal bills that have made their way through the legislative process. I would particularly like to thank everyone for their reasoned arguments and support on democratic renewal initiatives. I would also like to thank the member from Lanark–Carleton, Mr. Sterling, as the critic for the official opposition, and the member from Beaches–East York, Michael Prue, for all his well-thought-out debates and arguments, and last but certainly not least, my colleagues on this side of the House for their support.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to add some comments today on Bill 218, An Act to amend the Election Act and the Election Finances Act and make related amendments to other Acts. Our critic, Mr. Sterling, the member from Lanark–Carleton, would be here, but I understand he has an important meeting with some Senators at the Scotiabank Place this evening, so he's unable to be here. I'm pleased to add some comments coming largely from him.

As we have said in all previous debates on this bill, we agree with large portions of it. We agree with longer voting hours, more days of advanced polls, the requirement for third party advertisers to register, the addition of party names to ballots, requiring voters to show identification in order to vote. Also, personally, I feel that the public education component of the bill that gives powers to the Chief Electoral Officer to develop programs to educate more people, especially those coming of age to be able to vote, in terms of giving them knowledge about the electoral process, is especially important and hopefully will result in greater participation in the electoral process by more people. We are very relieved to see the minister finally deal with the need for public education regarding the referendum, even if the details are very sketchy. We have concerns about a couple of aspects of the bill and, more importantly, we have serious concerns about the timing of the bill and the lack of due process.

The bill was introduced on April 25, less than six months before the next election. Many parts of this bill are the result of a report released by the Chief Election Officer in September 2004. What took so long?

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As far as the provisions for a public education campaign, we've been calling for this since the beginning of the discussions on a possible referendum. The select committee on electoral reform recognized that poor public education was a problem in the British Columbia referendum and recommended that Elections Ontario be given this responsibility when we reported in November 2005. This should have been included in either the bill which established the citizens' assembly—that was Bill 213—or in Bill 155, which set the referendum. Again, what took so long?

The late introduction of this bill suggests that the government did not want to see much debate or consultation on this bill. That is a concern.

This bill is supposedly about improving our democracy, yet it was introduced in such a way as to avoid demo-

cratic debate as much as possible. Time allocating a bill about electoral reform is the ultimate arrogance and disrespect for our democratic system and traditions.

This is not the first time we have seen the McGuinty government obstruct the democratic process around a supposed democratic reform bill. They time allocated Bill 155, which established the rules for the upcoming referendum on electoral reform. Bill 62, which changed the rules for political parties to register, was neatly tucked into schedule 11 of the 200-plus-page budget bill. This shows a complete lack of respect for the Legislature and those of us elected to this Legislature.

Beyond that, we have concerns about the contents of this bill. In the rushed committee process, we tried to improve the bill with what I believe were constructive amendments, but the government barely even considered our suggestions.

First of all, we offered up two alternatives, both of which would limit spending by third party advertisers during an election. Candidates and parties are restricted in how much money they can spend on election advertising. Why shouldn't third party advertisers face similar restrictions? In the last election, we saw groups putting forward campaigns like the "Not this time, Ernie. Not this time" ads, and those groups were rewarded after the election with various pieces of legislation that have passed through this place, and I think the public should, at the very least, be aware of that. That's why I think it's important that third party advertising be disclosed and also why the amendment put forward by the member from Lanark–Carleton to limit the spending should have been approved by the committee. Unfortunately, the government defeated it.

I raise this issue because this government, in the recent budget, decreased their requirements for party registration so that a political party need only run members in two ridings to be allowed to register. They claim they did this to comply with a federal court decision regarding federal party registration rules. The court decision was, in part, based on the fact that third party advertising is restricted during federal elections. Because of that, small political parties successfully argued that their right to freedom of speech was being impeded. In Ontario, however, we do not currently restrict third party advertising, and as such, those smaller political parties could advertise without having to become registered political parties. The precedent didn't apply in Ontario, so why change the rules? Given that the government has changed the rules regarding party registration, we suggested adopting a limit on election ads by third party advertisers similar to that which limits spending during federal elections. We introduced two possible amendments to achieve that and distributed our motions to other members of the Legislative Assembly committee well in advance of the meeting. The member for York South–Weston gave our amendments fair consideration and voiced his support for one, but of course the government members of the committee voted against both.

Another part of this bill that we have some concerns about is the unbridled power being given to the Chief



Election Officer to try alternative voting methods in by-elections. I fully respect the Chief Election Officer, but I have concerns about anyone having the authority to make changes to our voting system without any checks and balances. We proposed that any such trials should be approved by a majority of the Chief Election Officer's all-party committee, a very simple suggestion, but of course the government members voted against it. It was a very typical response from this government: If it wasn't their idea, they won't support it. Then they wonder why this Legislature has become so adversarial and why we are desperately in need of parliamentary reform.

I want to point out that these amendments drafted by the member for Lanark-Carleton were drafted and moved in a spirit of constructive criticism. That is the job of the opposition in our system, but this government is very rarely willing to listen.

The McGuinty Liberals talked a lot about democratic reform during the last election. They promised consultation and committee hearings on all major pieces of legislation. This bill was officially sent out for consultation, but let's look at how that was done. One day of committee hearings was mandated, but because of the timing of this bill, that hearing was only advertised on the parliamentary channel and committee website, and presenters were only given approximately a day and a half to let the clerk know if they wanted to present. Is it no wonder that there were no presentations from the public on this bill? We had the Chief Election Officer come about the bill, and the minister. The Chief Election Officer certainly was very frank and gave lots of good insight into what could be done to improve the process for how elections are run in this province. However, I think the point is that if there had been some time and advance warning given, we would have had many members of the public and other people who are interested and experts who could have come before the committee and made some good recommendations.

In this case, they may have followed the letter of their promise but they most certainly broke the spirit of that promise. They promised to give MPPs more independence and power by allowing more free votes. To quote from their campaign platform, "We will make sure all non-cabinet MPPs are free to criticize and vote against government legislation, with the exception of explicit campaign promises and confidence matters." I'm sorry; my reaction to that is, "What a joke," because that has certainly not happened in the last four years. Let's see. I remember one bill on which government members broke ranks and that was on a local issue, Bill 186, the Regional Municipality of Peel Act. The members for Brampton Centre, Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale and Brampton West-Mississauga voted against this legislation. I believe that was the only government bill that government members were free to vote against, if their constituents wished.

I would say that the opposition has demonstrated that John Tory and the PC Party want to change that. Mr. Tory has pointed out that he would like to see substantial

parliamentary reform, and he has demonstrated that by allowing the opposition to have free votes. Where there's a difference of opinion or where members wish to represent their constituents, he has allowed that to happen. When he does allow that to happen, the government members ridicule the opposition members. I say, this place would be a much better place if more members represented their constituents and if there were more free votes.

Another example of a broken Liberal promise to improve accountability and transparency in the Ontario government is their promise to open up government contracts to public scrutiny. Not only did they promise to do this in their 2003 election platform, but in her last two annual reports the Information and Privacy Commissioner has called for public access to this information. Yet when opposition parties file freedom of information requests for such contracts, we are stonewalled.

In general, the Liberals talked a lot about democratic reform and about respect for MPPs and for this Legislature, but their actions have spoken louder than their words. I hope that Ontarians remember their actions as they start to hear the next round of election promises.

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In the few minutes I have left, I would like to talk about a couple of aspects of the bill which I do believe are positive and about what the opposition would like to see. First of all, the part of the bill—the new section 114.1—to do with public education, I believe, is very important. It authorizes the Chief Electoral Officer to "implement public education and information programs" and "provide the public with information about" the "electoral process."

Also, the new section 114.2 requires the Chief Electoral Officer to provide "information packages for new electors ... to school boards for distribution to students who have reached voting age or will soon do so."

I believe that we need to increase participation in the electoral process and we need to have more people who vote and are involved in the electoral process. I believe that giving these powers to the Chief Electoral Officer to implement public education programs is a positive thing. We need to get people interested at a young age. They need to learn about the electoral process in public school and high school, and be involved. So I'm pleased to see that change.

Before I close, I would also like to just briefly give my opinion with the fact that we need parliamentary reform around this place. I believe we need to enhance the role of the individual MPP. We need to see more free votes around this place. We need to make this place less adversarial and more civil. I know that's the desire of John Tory, the Leader of the Opposition, as well.

I believe we need to see more work for all-party committees. There was the select committee on alternative fuels back in the last PC government that I thought did a very effective job, made up, as I say, of all parties. They came up with many recommendations to do with alternative fuels. A few of the recommendations, like removing



the provincial sales tax on, I believe, biodiesel and some other alternative fuels, were acted upon. I think the work of committees like that can really make a difference.

I also believe we need to change the rules, some of the standing orders in this place. For my 25th anniversary trip this past winter with my wife, Chris, I had the privilege of visiting London, England. I dragged her into Westminster for a Monday evening debate. We're still married. At that debate, I was interested to learn some differences between Westminster and this place, including the fact that for question period—which tends to be more about the sound bite for the evening's newscast—there at Westminster, the questions are submitted three days in advance to the minister. I believe the Speaker just stands up and says, "It's question 22." The opposition member doesn't actually get to deliver the question. Hopefully, when the minister has had the question for three days, he may give a more thoughtful answer, and it's not about just gotcha politics where you're trying to surprise the minister. So hopefully you get a more thoughtful answer. In the supplementary, that's where the opposition member can ad lib it a little bit. I think that would make sense. It would make this place less confrontational and less about the sound bite for the evening news and more significant, more real.

I was interested to see in the debate, in that one evening session I was at, that there was an opposition member speaking, and the government minister was able to politely interrupt the opposition member and correct some of the facts right in the middle of the speech, which our rules certainly don't allow—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Miller:**—except in the form of heckling, the government whip is letting me know.

I was surprised in my brief time there. I think we can learn a lot from Westminster, and I believe we could make this place function in a more civilized manner and be less partisan, and probably gain more respect from the general public.

So I would like to see parliamentary reform around this place. I think it would be a very positive addition.

In closing, I'd just like to sum up. There are a number of changes in this bill that I support, that our party supports, like having the party name on the ballot. There were some minor changes to the titling: the title of the Chief Electoral Officer. There's the ability for the Chief Electoral Officer to test alternative voting methods in by-elections. As I say, we wanted that to be balanced with just an all-party committee of one member from each party to agree to that alternative testing method. There's room for additional techniques to update the voters' list, to improve the permanent register of electors, and the Chief Electoral Officer, at committee, did talk at length about that.

The voting time will be lengthened by one hour when the next general election happens. I think that allowing more time is always a positive thing.

This bill also makes more advance polls. There'd be 13 advance polling days, except in by-elections, when the timing of elections doesn't allow for it.

As I mentioned, the Chief Electoral Officer is given the responsibility of doing more public education for people when they come of age to vote, and he's also responsible for public education for the upcoming referendum, and I certainly see that as being very important.

I had the pleasure of sitting on the select committee on electoral reform. We visited British Columbia, and one of the points they made was that there wasn't enough public education leading up to the referendum in British Columbia on the recommendation from their citizens' assembly, which was the single transferable vote system.

I think some of the details of how the Chief Electoral Officer is going to educate the public on both the Yes and No sides are not spelled out, but it is important that that happen for both sides.

As I mentioned, there are also changes to the blackout period leading up to a general election and there are some rules to do with third party advertising in an election, although, as was pointed out, we wanted to see spending limits on that third party advertising. I think we made some very rational amendments, which unfortunately the government, en bloc, voted down.

We will be supporting this bill, even though the government voted down our constructive amendments.

All that being said, we do agree with the majority of this bill; much of it is really just common sense. But we are perplexed as to why the government waited to introduce this bill as late in their term as possible, forcing it to be time-allocated and democratic debate to be cut off.

I'd just like to conclude now and let the Legislature know that the PC Party will be supporting this bill.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** It's certainly my pleasure to have a few minutes in what appear to be the literal dying days of this government to speak to one of the very last things that they're going to try to deal with in this Legislature, which is Bill 218, the Election Statute Law Amendment Act. I say that because the rumours are fast and furious around here today—and I'm sure everybody around here has heard them—that this is the last debate that will be happening during this government's time in office, right now, as we speak. It's history in the making, if you will.

You might be happy to know or it might be interesting for you to know that it's almost three years to the day—it's a couple of days out—since I was actually sworn into this House, since I was given the opportunity, the pleasure, the honour to represent the people of Hamilton East and to bring the concerns and issues of the people of Hamilton East and the broader community of Hamilton to this Legislature. I hope that I've been able to, at least in some ways, raise the issues and concerns of my community here over those last three years.

I look forward to talking to people—as I do every single day that I'm in my own riding, in my own home community, but certainly over the next couple of months in a much more concentrated way—about the possible opportunity of being able to continue in this honourable role, because it really is a significant opportunity, it's a



significant honour, and it's a very positive way for me to give back to my community.

Positive, though, is not how I'm feeling right now in terms of the way that this government has decided to cut and run, when push comes to shove. There are a number of things that this government could still be here to accomplish over the next couple of weeks. In fact, the standing orders—and I'm not quite sure of the exact date in the standing orders; I'm sure my friend from Niagara Centre knows the exact date—require this House to sit until pretty much the end of June. That is not happening now—my understanding is and rumour has it—and we'll find out very shortly. In fact, I'm tense with anticipation and anxiety to see whether those rumours are true.

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There are many things that this government could have kept us here to do. One only needs to look at the order paper to identify not only government bills but particularly private members' bills as well that could have had some attention over these next three weeks. Unlike in the fall—it wasn't in the fall really, it was the beginning of winter, in December, when the government decided to add on eight extra days of time here in the Legislature to give itself a big pay raise. Unlike that time, now the government is cutting and running with that pay raise to try to get a couple of extra weeks of downtime in before the election takes place in the fall. From my perspective, that's problematic. I really think it's a sad state of affairs when the Liberal government—although there are a number of pieces of legislation that are sitting on the order paper waiting to be debated and waiting to make real positive change in this province, they're not going to see the light of day because Liberal members really don't want to be here.

Why don't they want to be here? Well, certainly they wanted to be here long enough to pass Bill 218, which is the bill we're discussing tonight. I'm going to be spending a few minutes on that just briefly, but in terms of the context, they want to be here for this—which is great, and that's fine and the debate is good and it's positive—but they don't want to be here particularly tomorrow. Why not?

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** Why not?

**Ms. Horwath:** Why do they not want to be here tomorrow? Well, of all things, tomorrow is an interesting day because there is a particular committee—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Horwath:** “Tomorrow, tomorrow”—I don't sing very well. My friend who represents the riding of Hamilton West actually is the singer in the community. She is sitting here now. She has actually got a very good singing voice and I certainly don't. I cannot carry a tune.

Nonetheless, the bottom line is that tomorrow there is a committee being held and it's called the estimates committee. What's happening at that committee? That's the committee where the opposition parties have an opportunity to talk about particular budgets of particular ministries in a very focused, direct way. Intensive questioning goes on. The minister responsible for that parti-

cular ministry is brought before the committee with a number of support staff and they are basically grilled. They are put on the hot seat. They're raked over the coals—the Michael Colles, should I say? And that's the crux of the matter. Estimates committee tomorrow was supposed to be about the minister responsible for citizenship and immigration coming to respond to the opposition parties about the slushgate or the Collegate issue that has caused such a stir and that has, I'm sure, many more interesting tidbits that need to be pulled out from underneath the little rocks that they're hiding under. Unfortunately, my understanding is that the government doesn't want to do that so the government is going to pull the plug tonight—this very eve—so that tomorrow we won't be able to undertake that exercise with that minister.

I might be wrong. I could be a cynic. I could be totally miscalculating this and miscalcating it. Of course, it's my first time ever that I've gone through this process of the actual winding down of a government—like the day they pull the plug—so I wouldn't recognize it necessarily. But my esteemed colleagues who have been here much longer than I—particularly my House leader, the member for Niagara Centre, Mr. Kormos, knows what the signs are, knows how to read the tea leaves. Okay, maybe he doesn't read tea leaves, maybe he goes to the casino and reads the cards—I don't know. But nonetheless, the bottom line is, there is absolutely no doubt—or very little doubt—in my mind that the government is going to pull the plug.

I think it's fairly sad that on the very night that we're talking about electoral reform, more or less, about a bill that is supposed to change the way Ontarians experience the voting system, experience their right to vote, at the same time that this government is bringing forward a bill for final reading and for approval by this House on the issues that are important to people around the voting system in the context of a government that ran on the issue of transparency, accountability and blah-blah-blah, the bottom line is that this very government is pulling the plug to prevent transparency, to put a veil over the issue of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in regard to that particular scandal, that particular slushgate, Collegate—and I'm not talking about the toothpaste now—that occurred a couple of weeks ago.

It's unfortunate, because the very cynicism that electors in this province have and that the government purports to want to address in bills like 218 and in bills like their proportional representation initiative they undertook—those very precepts are ones that everybody supports. But then they turn around and do things like pull the plug on the transparency and the due process that bring to light what this government's been doing under the cover of lack of scrutiny, and that scrutiny is supposed to take place tomorrow. Unfortunately, this government has decided that they can't take the heat. Whether the minister himself can't take the heat or whether the Premier doesn't want to take the heat in question period tomorrow, the day after that and the day



after that for the next three weeks, I don't know. That's for them to answer, and I guess at some point, the people of Ontario are going to have a great opportunity to speak to every one of the MPPs in this Legislature about whether those values they purport to have actually translate into reality, when you see the kinds of shenanigans that go on around here.

Nonetheless, on Bill 218 itself, there were a number of issues I was concerned about, personally. The first one that jumped out at me, and it's still there, was that there was very little change to the bill after it went through the committee process, notwithstanding the fact that there were some good comments and opportunities for changes. One that really makes me concerned is the one around the provision of identification, which is required as of this new bill passing sometime, likely tonight.

The reason I say this is because I hearken back to my by-election and the real attempt that was made by one of our inner-city churches. I believe it's a United Church. It's called the Centenary United Church, right downtown. I'm sure MPPs who represent the Hamilton area know very well the Centenary United Church. It's right on Main Street; it's right in the middle of the commercial—not really so much in the institutional sector of our downtown on Main Street, wedged around city hall and the convention facility. The good people of Centenary United worked very hard during the by-election to spend time talking to and—what's the right word; encouraging, I guess is the right word—encouraging people whom we would typically label to be disenfranchised. These are low-income people. Many of them were living in shelters. Those who weren't living in shelters were very, very low-income people. Many of them had a number of different barriers in terms of their ability to fully participate and engage in all number of community activities the rest of us take for granted, whether those are cultural activities, political activities, employment activities or social activities. The bottom line is, many of these people were and continue to be very much considered the disenfranchised. I don't like putting on labels, but certainly that's how we could consider those people in terms of their ability or opportunity to engage.

What the minister, the volunteers and the activists in that church did was, they went out on purpose and made a huge effort to get those people involved in that by-election—to invite them to come to the church, to invite candidates to have a debate, and walked through the process of what it takes to actually cast a vote with them. Many of those people had not voted in some time; others had been diligent, in terms of their efforts to vote whenever there was an election. But I've got to tell you, what this bill will do—and it's very odd—is make it more difficult for those very people to actually cast a ballot.

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Why do I say that? Because what it does is, it says that the—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Horwath:** I think some of the government members are making fun of people who live in poverty in

our community in Hamilton. It's very disheartening and difficult for me to ignore when Liberal members are making fun of people who are living in poverty in my community. But, of course, why would I be surprised, because they've really done nothing for those people anyway?

But the bottom line is, what this particular bill does is that it asks people who don't get the voting card, who don't get the card that you're registered on the voters' list, don't receive that, to bring two pieces of identification to the polls to be able to identify themselves as voters. A lot of people in lower-income communities, particularly the ones I know of, have difficulty in providing that. Many of them don't have a driver's licence. Lots of them don't have their birth certificates. Most of them don't have a social insurance card. Some of them have an OHIP card. Of course, that's one of the things they need the most. In fact, just serving the people in my community at my constituency office, I know very well that many people don't have these official pieces of identification. So all the work that was done by people like Bill McKinnon and the minister there, Wayne Irwin, and others around trying to organize these people would come up with a little bit more of a barrier in terms of providing opportunity for those residents of our communities to be able to vote, and that concerns me.

A government that's saying they want to make it easier for people to vote is perhaps putting up barriers for particular constituencies of people; I think particularly the people in my community and, unfortunately, there are many thousands of them who are not in the same situation as many of us are. So that's my first concern.

But then, on the other hand, if you have the card, if you receive a card or obtain a card in some way, then you can automatically vote. You don't even have to show any ID. You can just go and vote. That's one of the things that really concerns me in terms of the way this bill is written. So you get to wonder a little bit what's really the motivation in terms of this initiative.

I'm a little bit concerned about both on the one side the opportunities for people who are extremely disenfranchised to be able to exercise their vote, to exercise their franchise and then, on the other hand, the extent to which—again, I come from a community where I've seen it happen. I've seen it happen at municipal elections, and I've seen it happen in my by-election and I don't expect it to stop happening. Sometimes it's unfortunate, but sometimes it happens, that that voting card is brought forward to the polls without the people who are really necessary in terms of who it is that owns that ID.

But I have to say that the other issue is proxy voting. Again, this is where people who are bringing forward the—

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: All Ontarians must show two pieces of ID at the ballot box.

**The Acting Speaker:** It's not a point of order. Please continue.



**Ms. Horwath:** The other issue I'm a little bit concerned about is the extent to which some people need to have four pieces of identification to vote. So you'll need not only your own identification, but then you need to bring two pieces of identification from the person you're proxy voting for. From my perspective, that's another barrier for people in terms of the ability to get that vote recorded.

So when we talk about concerns, whether it's from Ontario, whether it's in terms of the country or even internationally in terms of identity theft and in terms of those issues around your own identification and the extent to which that identification could be misused, I get a little concerned about the extent to which you'll really have to explain to people and then convince them that providing not only their signature but then handing over two pieces of ID for you then to take from your relative or friend and go and vote on their behalf in the situation of proxy voting, it's problematic. It's problematic, and I'm a little concerned that the government didn't really think that out very well in terms of asking people to relinquish their ID and have it taken out of their home to the polls in order for the proxy voting to take place.

Although there are a number of other issues in this bill, the one I'm really concerned about is the extent to which the government purports to, in this bill, have a goal of making it easier for people to cast their ballot. But when you look at the detail in the bill, I have real concerns that the exact opposite is what is written down in black and white. I have to say I'm not surprised, though, because there are many pieces of government legislation over my three years here that I've seen where the government talks the talk on the one hand, but when it comes to walking the walk, it certainly doesn't measure up. Similarly, it's the same situation with Bill 218, unfortunately.

But I wanted to end off by saying that notwithstanding the fact that this bill is here and it's likely to be the last bill that is passed by this Legislature, it has certainly been quite a positive experience for me to learn from my colleagues, particularly in the NDP caucus and particularly colleagues that we know are not going to be running again, like Ms. Martel, the member from—how soon we forget—Nickel Belt. I have to say that she has been a very diligent member in this House, and a lot of the work that has been done by her has been followed up by others in our caucus as well.

So as we go through the next couple of months in terms of the pre-election period after tonight, when the government pulls the plug and decides that they're going to cut and run to avoid the questions that are going to come to estimates committee tomorrow, as well as avoid any further question periods, so they can get their early vacation, the bottom line is that there are many, many people who can simply look on the Internet and read the Hansards. If they really want to know what this government has been doing, as opposed to what they say they've been doing, then it's a matter of reading the

Hansards, and I would ask the residents of Ontario, if they're really interested in an issue, to make sure they take the time to review not only what the government says it's doing but what the critics, in their very important roles, whether it's government critics or critics from the New Democratic Party caucus—what they reveal, I guess is the best way to say it, about the real activities of the government, as opposed to their spin, as opposed to their ribbon cutting, their photo ops and their enlisting of Hollywood stars to come and get the cameras rolling and give them a big boost.

The bottom line is that the government is going to be judged very, very shortly in the province of Ontario, and I certainly look forward to doing my part in my community to unveil exactly what they haven't done.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** I'm extremely pleased to stand here to talk about the third reading of Bill 218. The changes we propose, although they sounded a little different by the tone of the last speaker, actually include some practical steps to modernize elections in Ontario. These changes are going to make a real difference in addressing some of the barriers that we've identified and the flaws that we believe may have been contributing factors to the decline in voter turnout.

If passed, these changes would be in place for the October 10 election. The legislation would enhance participation in Ontario's elections. Higher voter turnout would be encouraged by giving the Chief Electoral Officer the explicit authority to undertake election-related public education campaigns and communications. The Chief Electoral Officer would be able to make the electoral process better known to the public.

As the honourable Minister Bountrogianni described moments ago, Mr. John Hollins, Ontario's Chief Electoral Officer, spoke about these changes at the May 17 hearing of the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly. On the topic of elector education, the CEO said that he would support Elections Ontario's efforts to improve education and deliver the message that voting matters to a broader base of Ontarians. He said that the changes in Bill 218 "would give us the authority to sponsor, through ongoing education, this level of engagement."

This legislation, if passed, would make it easier for Ontarians to vote by doubling the number of advance poll days in regularly scheduled general elections. We're going to increase it from six to 13. There would also be 10 days of advance polls at other locations. We would extend the polling day by another hour at the end of the day so people would have more time to vote on election day. This decision was supported and recommended by Mr. Hollins, the CEO, and he believes this is a great first step toward a future of allowing Ontarians to vote anywhere, any time.

Presently, polling stations need only be centralized and convenient. This legislation will also allow us to expand on the current criteria for selected polling locations,



which will include convenience, capacity, familiarity and the lack of geographic barriers. Elections Ontario would continue to be able to locate polling stations in apartment buildings, schools, municipal and provincial buildings. Simply put, this means more options and convenience for electors.

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Another barrier to voter turnout is the voters' list. We want to ensure that eligible voters are on this list. This initiative is time-consuming, but it's paramount to improving confidence in the elections process. The accuracy of the permanent register of electors would be improved if this legislation was passed. Elections Ontario would be required to update the permanent register of electors, and the CEO would have the flexibility to conduct targeted registration programs in the years in which regularly scheduled general elections are to be held. The CEO would also be required to provide new voter information to school boards for distribution to those students approaching that critical voting age.

The permanent register of electors is clearly a list that's constantly in flux. Therefore, we've provided a number of criteria for targeting and capturing those individuals most likely to be left off the register or improperly left on it. This would include transient mobile populations, registering electors who are new citizens and young people approaching the voting age. As stated earlier, Elections Ontario would be required to provide new voter information to school boards, and these packages would give students and their parents a better understanding of our electoral processes. We believe that the participation of young Ontarians is essential to the health of our democracy. A number of techniques will be carried out in a targeted registration program. Enumeration can be used for part or all of a riding. As well, other methods will be available to the CEO so that he or she can determine the most effective way to target populations. The CEO would have the freedom to decide which technique is more likely to achieve our collective goal of improving voter turnout.

This legislation would also require Elections Ontario to conduct a neutral public education campaign for the upcoming referendum on electoral reform. One of the things we learned from the referendum in British Columbia was that many voters weren't quite sure what they were voting for. We want to make sure all Ontarians understand what they're voting for at the polls leading up to our province's first referendum since 1921. That's why this legislation will empower CEO John Hollins with the freedom and the explicit authority to undertake a comprehensive, non-partisan public education and communications program.

In the remaining moments I have, I'd just like to acknowledge a visit by a delegation from the United Kingdom Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association from May 29 to May 31. We had Austin Mitchell, Ann Cryer, Jeffrey Ennis, Roger Godsiff and Dennis Rogan visit us. They came to find out about our

legislation because they're somewhat jealous of the process that we've gone through. They want to find a way to improve voter turnout and they haven't been successful. So they came here to ask questions, to find out how we did it and how best they could try to introduce legislation into their House in order to find a way to improve voter turnout. They asked some very penetrating questions, they held me to the hot seat and they visited many people in the Legislature. They were very impressed with the thoroughness and the kinds of amendments we made to the legislation that would certainly improve the accessibility, the voters' list. They were actually very interested in a lot of municipal elections. We had a lot in common, and they were very interested in what we had to say about elections. I will be forwarding the bill to them should it receive approval today. I look forward to their comments and seeing if this ground-breaking legislation that was introduced by Minister Bountrogianni will find its way into the English Legislature sometime in the future. This could be the birth of some very serious legislative changes in another chamber.

This legislation lays the groundwork for future changes once the current electoral reform process is complete. It's another example of how this government is working hard to reform and modernize our political institutions and processes. Our government continues to be a leader in advancing our ambitious democratic renewal agenda, and I believe that this bill is a step in the right direction. It promotes Mr. Hollins's three pillars of a fair election: accessibility, integrity and participation. I know that all members in this House are interested in improving voter turnout, voter participation. We wouldn't be here otherwise. Everybody here has experienced that apathy at the door. We all want to change that. We have a lot of young voters who are going to participate on October 10. We want to get them engaged, excited, enthusiastic about government and legislation and the policies that we bring to this House, because we want to build a better province, a stronger province, one that will be strong enough to withstand anything that is thrown at it, whatever comes. I have every confidence that people here in this chamber understand its importance, and I urge them to support this piece of legislation.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate? There being no further debate, and the time having elapsed—there were only a few seconds, but I just thought I'd see if anyone else was interested—it is now incumbent that I call the question.

Mrs. Bountrogianni has moved third reading of Bill 218, An Act to amend the Election Act and the Election Finances Act and make related amendments to other Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. There will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1946 to 1956.*



**The Acting Speaker:** All those in favour will please stand and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne  
Baikisssoon, Bas  
Bentley, Christopher  
Bountrogianni, Marie  
Brownell, Jim  
Caplan, David  
Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Dombrowsky, Leona  
Duguid, Brad  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Gerretsen, John

Gravelle, Michael  
Hoy, Pat  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Levac, Dave  
Marsales, Judy  
Mauro, Bill  
McNeely, Phil  
Miller, Norm  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Oraziotti, David

Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Parsons, Ernie  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Racco, Mario G.  
Ramai, Khalil  
Ramsay, David  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Wilkinson, John  
Zimmer, David

**The Acting Speaker:** All those opposed will please stand and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Bisson, Gilles  
Hampton, Howard

Horwath, Andrea  
Kormos, Peter

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 42; the nays are 4.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** On a point of order, Speaker: I'd like members to join me in welcoming to the east members' gallery teacher Eric Ma and some of the terrific Peel science students who are here for the Sci-Tech fair.

**The Acting Speaker:** Orders of the day.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I seek unanimous consent to call orders for second and third reading of Bill 227, An Act to repeal The Jack Miner Migratory Bird Foundation Act, 1936, and for the questions to be put immediately without debate or amendment.

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr. Crozier has moved a motion for unanimous consent to call the orders for the second and third reading of Bill 227, An Act to repeal The Jack Miner Migratory Bird Foundation Act, 1936, and for the questions to be put immediately without debate or amendment. Is there unanimous consent?

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** I heard a no. Orders of the day.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I too seek unanimous consent to revert back to motions so that we may deal with a committee motion without debate or amendment as follows: That the following committees be authorized to meet during the summer adjournment, and notwithstanding prorogation, as fol-

lows: standing committee on government agencies to consider intended appointments in accordance with standing order 106(e); standing committee on the Legislative Assembly to attend the 2007 annual meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures by any member of the committee or their designate; standing committee on public accounts to attend the 28th annual conference of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees; and

That the committees be authorized to release reports by depositing a copy of any report with the Clerk of the Assembly during the summer adjournment or between the second and third sessions of the 38th Parliament, as the case may be, and that in any case the Chairs of the committees shall bring any such reports before the House not later than the first sessional day reports from committees may be received when the House next meets.

Speaker, I seek unanimous consent of the House for the following motion.

**The Acting Speaker:** The deputy government House leader has moved unanimous consent to refer back to motions, and he has moved that the following committees be authorized to meet—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Dispense? Dispensed. Is there unanimous consent? I heard some noes.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: One of our own, a friend and a colleague, will be leaving this place and not seeking re-election. I'm seeking unanimous consent for one member of each party to pay a short tribute to the member from Prince Edward-Hastings, Ernie Parsons.

**The Acting Speaker:** The government whip is seeking unanimous consent to have one member from each party speak to the departing member from Prince Edward-Hastings, Mr. Ernie Parsons. Is there unanimous consent? I heard a no.

**Hon. Mr. Caplan:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker:** The deputy government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Sorry, I didn't hear the no. I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Carried.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** It was too long. Carried.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

*The House adjourned at 2003.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

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Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller  
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffières parlementaires: Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum  
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
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Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b> Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton Mountain	Horwath, Andrea (ND)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Kular, Kuldip (L)		<b>Bountrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie (L)</b> Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	Marsales, Judy (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b> Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)		Mitchell, Carol (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Huron-Bruce	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Burlington	Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b> Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)		Milloy, John (L)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)		
Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (L)</b> Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tory, John (PC) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
Eglinton-Lawrence	<b>Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (L)</b> Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)</b> Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Erie-Lincoln Essex	Hudak, Tim (PC)	London West / London-Ouest	<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L)</b> Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
	<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b> Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	London-Fanshawe Markham	Ramal, Khalil (L)
	<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L)</b> Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L)</b> Minister of Revenue / ministre du Revenu
	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)		<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)</b> Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship / ministre des Petites Entreprises et de l'Entrepreneuriat
	<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b> Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Fonseca, Peter (L)
	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Peterson, Tim (Ind.)
	Sandals, Liz (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Delaney, Bob (L)
		Nepean-Carleton	MacLeod, Lisa (PC)
		Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)
		Niagara Falls	Craiton, Kim (L)



Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)
Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)	Stormont-Dundas- Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (L)</b> Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)		
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thunder Bay-Superior	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (L)</b> Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation	North / Thunder Bay-Superior- Nord	
Ottawa West-Nepean Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L)</b> Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé	Timiskaming-Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa-Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)		Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Ottawa-Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (L)</b> Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (L)</b> Deputy Premier, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / vice-premier ministre, ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Parkdale-High Park	DiNovo, Cheri (ND)	Toronto-Danforth	Tabuns, Peter (ND)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Perth-Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	<b>Sorbara, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (L)</b> Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
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Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Waterloo-Wellington	<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b> First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)		Elliott, Christine (PC)
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Scarborough East Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V. (L)</b> Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse	Windsor-St. Clair	Munro, Julia (PC)
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Scarborough-Agincourt	Balkissoon, Bas (L)		
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Simcoe North Simcoe-Nord		York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	
Simcoe Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)	York West / York-Ouest	
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St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L)</b> Attorney General / procureur général		

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Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

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Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Andrea Horwath, Jeff Leal, Dave Levac,  
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Rosario Marchese, Bill Mauro, John O'Toole,  
Ernie Parsons, Khalil Ramal  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day



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